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LD181349 [Editorial Report]

U.S.-Iranian Clash in Gulf

The 18 April U.S. attack on two Iranian oil platforms in the Persian Gulf was reported by IRNA, which announced that the Nasr and Salman platforms came under fire from "aggressive" U.S. warships and helicopters. The U.S. attack followed accusations that Iran was responsible for planting a mine which damaged a U.S. destroyer 14 April, the agency noted, adding that Iran denied these charges and warned the U.S. Administration against any "military aggression."

In a statement carried by Tehran radio, Iran's Supreme War Support Council called on war veterans to rejoin IRGC and Basij forces to participate in a "holy defense against the U.S. invasion." The statement asserted that "U.S. forces have entered the war," claiming that U.S. personnel have assisted the Iraqi offensive in Al-Faw by attacking Iranian positions in that area. On the question of the mine which hit the USS Samuel Roberts, Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani stated earlier that news of this incident may be a "purposeful lie" by the United States, IRNA noted.

In the wake of the U.S. attack, an Iranian warship attacked an oil platform used by a U.S. company in the southern Gulf, causing serious damage and a fire, according to AFP. The platform attacked by Iran is in the Mubarak oil field, which belongs to the UAE emirate of Al-Shariqah, the report added. An Iranian ship also attacked a British-flagged oil barge in the same area, London PRESS ASSOCIATION announced. Other "dramatic incidents" in the Gulf included a clash in which an Iranian warship was hit by missiles fired by a U.S. frigate after the Iranian vessel fired at a U.S. cruiser, the London agency added.

Iran-Iraq Conflict

Iraqi Offensive in Al-Faw—Iraqi forces "totally destroyed" all Iranian forces in the Al-Faw triangle 17 April and the only enemy forces remaining in the area are small groups which face the options of death, defeat, or captivity, the Iraqi command announced in a communique broadcast by Baghdad radio. The Iranian front and rear headquarters in Al-Faw have been destroyed and units of the Iraqi Presidential Guard and VII Army Corps are continuing their advance, the communique said. The Iraqi attack began at 0230 GMT 17 April when Presidential Guards stormed Iranian defenses in the "Salty Lake," north of Al-Faw, liberating the lake and the sea coast parallel to it, according to an earlier communique carried by Voice of the Masses radio. The VII Army also attacked Iranian positions on the western bank of the Shatt al-'Arab at the same time. The communique claimed that "thousands" of Iranian forces were killed or wounded, while "large numbers" were captured.

Tehran radio reported that Iranian forces crushed the Iraqi attack 17 April, inflicting "thousands" of casualties and destroying "dozens" of armored vehicles. However, the radio acknowledged that heavy fighting was continuing and it accused Iraq of bombarding Iranian positions with chemical weapons. A Tehran radio report the following morning claimed that the Iraqis were being supported by "U.S. war helicopters," which "attacked the positions of the forces of Islam in southern Al-Faw on a number of occasions from the sea." Enemy helicopters were operating from Kuwait's Bubiyan Island, the radio claimed.

Despite this attack "from two fronts," the Iranian forces in Al-Faw "bravely defended" their positions and repelled the attacks, the radio asserted. Another radio report noted that Iranian aircraft carried out 15 missions against Iraqi forces in the Al-Faw area 18 April. Although reports by the radio and IRNA claimed that an Iraqi frigate and three other vessels were sunk by Iranian fire in the nearby Khawr 'Abdallah channel 17 April, an Iraqi spokesman told INA that such claims were "lies" aimed at alleviating the impact of the Iranian defeat in Al-Faw.

War of the Cities—Iraq launched 17 "Al-Husayn" missiles at Iran between 2005 GMT 15 April and 0559 GMT 18 April, according to announcements over Voice of the Masses radio. Ten were targeted on Tehran, including six launched simultaneously the morning of 17 April. Three others were fired at Qom, three at Esfahan, and one at Shiraz. Communiques carried by the radio also announced 10 more air strikes on Iranian cities 15-16 April. Dezful and Hamadan were both attacked three times.

For Iran's part, IRNA reported that two surface-to-surface missiles were fired at Baghdad 16 April, and a communique cited by the agency also reported Iranian air strikes on four Iraqi cities the same day. The targets included Ba'qubah, 28 miles northeast of Baghdad. An Iraqi claim to have shot down an Iranian aircraft over northern Iraq that day was denied by an Iranian military spokesman, IRNA noted. A subsequent military communique announced that Iranian planes raided the Iraqi cities of Dahuk, Qa'lat Dizah, and 'Aqrah 18 April, according to the agency.

On the effects of the Iraqi attacks, IRNA indicated that 28 people were killed in Iraqi air raids 15 April, while 9 others were killed in missile attacks on Tehran and Shiraz the following day. Further casualties were inflicted in the missile attacks 17-18 April. Iraqi spokesmen cited by Voice of the Masses and INA likewise acknowledged that Iranian missile and air attacks inflicted "a number" of casualties 16 April.

Iranian Majlis Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani commented on the war of the cities in a Friday sermon broadcast by Tehran radio, claiming that "the Iraqi damage is decidedly greater than ours." Craters created by Iranian missiles in Baghdad are 12 meters wide and over 10 meters deep, and their shock wave is "five times" that of missiles hitting Tehran, he contended.

Assassination of Khalil al-Wazir

Khalil al-Wazir, member of the Fatah Central Committee and the deputy commander in chief of PLO forces, was assassinated early 16 April at his residence in Tunisia, Tunis radio announced. Al-Wazir, alias "Abu Jihad," was shot dead when seven assassins entered his house in the Tunis suburb of Sidi Bousaid, killing his two Palestinian guards and a Tunisian gardener. The assassins, who included one woman, then escaped in hired vehicles which they abandoned further up the coast at Raoued, the radio said. AFP noted that telephone lines to Sidi Bousaid were cut with "sophisticated electronic devices" prior to the assassination.

A PLO source cited an eyewitness report that the female member of the hit-squad filmed the attack with a video camera, according to WAKH. Al-Wazir's wife later told Radio Monte Carlo that he was only able to fire one shot at his attackers before being riddled with over 75 bullets. She expressed hope that "Fatah will be born again" as a result of her husband's "martyrdom."

PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat claimed that the assassination was the result of "an Israeli decision taken at the highest level" and with a "green light" from the U.S. Administration, AFP reported. The PLO Executive Committee and Fatah Central Committee mourned Al-Wazir's death in a joint statement broadcast by Baghdad Voice of the PLO radio, asserting that this "great hero of the Arab nation" was killed by the hands of the "fascist, racist Israeli ruling clique which is plunging to its ears in a sea of Palestinian blood." Abu Jihad's death "will only increase the flames of our people's revolution," the PLO statement maintained, adding that Israel is deluded if it thinks such actions can extinguish the revolution "which is burning all over Palestine."

Palestinians in the occupied territories reacted to the news of Al-Wazir's assassination by staging new protests during which 12 people were killed and over 40 wounded, Jerusalem television reported. Military sources noted that the circumstances of seven of these deaths are still under investigation. Jerusalem radio indicated that the disturbances were particularly severe in the Gaza Strip, Al-Wazir's former home, where 6 people were killed and 25 injured by IDF fire. Al-Wazir's relatives set up a large mourning tent surrounded by black flags.

The hundreds of mourners included lawyer Fayiz Abu Rahmah, Al-Wazir's cousin, who blamed Israel for the assassination, the radio added. In further clashes with the IDF on 17 April, three youths who attacked IDF soldiers with axes were shot and wounded near Tulkarm, the radio reported.

Israeli officials did not react to Al-Wazir's murder, Jerusalem television reported, noting that officials in both the prime minister's office and the Foreign Ministry told journalists that they know nothing about who was responsible. Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres told Jerusalem radio that he "would not like to refer to the Abu Jihad issue in any way." The Israeli ambassador in France claimed that the killing was the result of a PLO internal feud, Paris radio reported.

Reporting on reaction among Israeli politicians outside the government, Jerusalem radio cited Tehiya MK Ge'ula Kohen's view that "if Israel did not kill Abu Jihad, she should have." A YEDI'OT AHARONOT commentary on the assassination acknowledged that the tactics of the attackers were similar to a previous Israeli raid in Beirut, and the paper stressed that Israel had "sufficient and convincing motives" to kill Al-Wazir, including his role in planning the recent terrorist attack near Dimona. In contrast, a PLO official told Paris radio that Al-Wazir was targeted by Israelis because of his role in organizing the Palestinian "uprising" in the territories.

Among Arab reaction, Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali condemned the assassination and ordered an inquiry into the circumstances, Tunis radio reported. PETRA-JNA noted that Jordanian King Husayn sent a cable of condolences to PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, and the JORDAN TIMES held that the Israelis were behind the killing of Al-Wazir, who "represented the realistic, pragmatic and honorable Palestinian majority." Condolences were also sent to 'Arafat by the Egyptian president, the Kuwaiti prime minister, the Algerian president, and Libya's Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, according to respective reports by Cairo radio, KUNA, Algiers radio, and Tripoli radio.

Cairo radio carried a statement by an Egyptian journalist who contended that Israel's Mosad was responsible for the murder, "even if it used Arab hands." In Syria, an AL-BA'TH commentary cited by Damascus radio viewed the assassination as part of an intensification of Israel's "terrorist" policies against the Palestinians, and SANA noted that Palestinian leaders in Damascus denounced Al-Wazir's murder. Nevertheless, monitored Syrian media have not thus far carried any official Syrian statement on the issue.

Hijacked Kuwaiti Airliner

The aircraft remained on the tarmac at Houari Boumedienne Airport 18 April following five meetings between the hijackers and Algerian mediators the previous day,

Algiers radio reported. The radio had earlier cited a message to the airport control tower from one of the Kuwaiti hostages, who urged his government to release the 17 prisoners as soon as possible, "otherwise our end will be black." The hijackers told three journalists 16 April that there will be "slaughter" on the plane if Kuwait does not free the 17, APS noted. However, the hijackers stressed that they do not want to commit slaughter in Algeria, and they called on the Algerian authorities to provide the plane with fuel "in order to settle our problems with Kuwait in another place." The hijackers set a "deadline" for leaving Algeria on 17 April, but then extended it in response to an Algerian request, KUNA noted. The Kuwaiti prime minister has asked the Algerian authorities to prevent the plane from leaving, KUNA disclosed.

Lebanon

U.S. Lieutenant Colonel William Higgins was killed by Hizballah forces to "avoid handing him to Amal" during recent clashes between the movements, Voice of Lebanon radio reported 18 April. According to the radio, Col Higgins was moved by Iranian Revolution Guards from Jibshit to Al-Siddiqin and was killed and buried there when Amal stormed Jibshit looking for him, the radio added. However, a UNIFIL press spokesman cited by Beirut radio "dismissed" the report on the death of Col Higgins as "illogical."

Voice of Lebanon also reported that Hizballah and Iran's IRGC set up a joint command to "assassinate" high-ranking Amal officials and carry out operations against Amal checkpoints and centers. The radio further reported that Hizballah and Palestinian officials discussed the possibility of Fatah providing military aid to Hizballah. Meanwhile, according to Beirut radio, Israeli military forces have taken "stringent" security measures, stationing "hundreds" of soldiers and "scores" of armored cars along the border.

Jordan

Amman Bomb—A bomb exploded in a car parked near the Amman municipality offices 16 April, causing a fire but no casualties, an official spokesman disclosed in a statement carried by Amman radio. Noting that "this criminal incident occurred following Jordan's clear pan-Arab stand in defense of Arab rights in Palestine," the spokesman viewed the bombing as an attempt to divert attention from the uprising in the occupied territories. In Beirut, the "Black September" organization claimed responsibility for the bomb attack, according to Voice of Lebanon radio. The same group had assumed responsibility for another explosion in the Jordanian capital on 9 April.

Protest on U.S. Veto—Jordan officially protested the U.S. veto of a draft UN Security Council resolution criticizing Israeli actions in the occupied territories, Amman radio reported. The protest note was given to the U.S. ambassador by Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri 16 April.

Saudi Arabia and the Hajj

A Royal Court statement transmitted by SPA urged "all brothers, citizens, and residents" who have already performed the hajj to "make room" for pilgrims who have not done so. The statement linked this request with current limitations on accomodation available for pilgrims in Mecca and Al-Madinah, noting that work to construct "huge modern buildings" to house the "largest possible number" of pilgrims near the holy places will take 3 years. Old buildings in the area must first be demolished, thus affecting the capacity of the two holy cities to receive all the pilgrims. The statement expressed King Fahd's gratitude to those Islamic countries which have reduced the numbers of their pilgrims in line with an ICO decision to regulate the numbers on the basis of population.

Iran, Syria Oil Talks

Antonios Habib, Syrian minister of oil and mineral resources, and his Iranian counterpart Gholam Reza Aqazadeh, began talks in Tehran 16 April, Tehran radio reported. Habib stressed Syria's "steadfast" support for Iran in its war with Iraq, while Aqazadeh pledged Iran's continued support for Syria against "imperialism and Zionism." They discussed Iran's oil sales and oil assistance to Syria, the radio added, and Aqazadeh assured Habib that Iran is prepared to promptly provide oil for Syrian refineries.

Libyan, Algerian Talks

Algerian Foreign Minister Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi visited Tripoli 16 and 17 April, according to JANA. He gave a message from Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid to Colonel al-Qadhdhafi, and they discussed permanent Algerian-Libyan consultation and coordination.

Sudan

Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi submitted his resignation and that of his government 16 April, noting that the formation of a new government will be announced 18 April, SUNA reported. According to Omdurman radio, the chairman of the State Council asked Al-Mahdi to continue running the government until the new government is formed and a new prime minister is elected.

Afghanistan

President Najibullah, in a 16 April address carried by Kabul radio, said that the government is "ready to study the possibility" of removing armed forces from the

border, provided that the returnees prevent the opposition from operating in their areas. He added that the government would assist in forming and arming local militias in those areas.

Najibullah appealed to the opposition, which has declared that it will continue its armed resistance, to discuss participation in the government "with Afghans in Afghanistan, not with the representatives of foreign countries." However, he stressed that the armed opposition groups which had remained in the country will have a bigger, better share in the coalition administration.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister 'Abdul Wakil and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze met in Moscow and praised the signing of the accords, Kabul radio reported. Pakistani President Ziaul Haq sent a message on the Geneva agreement to CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, according to Islamabad radio.

In Pakistan, the cleanup of a 10 April ammunition dump explosion resulted in 10 casualties when an army bomb disposal squad accidentally set off a bomb in the camp area, Islamabad radio reported.

Palestinian Affairs

Reportage on Assassination of Al-Wazir, Reaction

'Commando Group' Attacks Home

JN160632 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] In Tunis, at 0115 local time, an eight-man commando group assassinated Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, member of the Fatah Central Committee, and a close aide of Yasir 'Arafat. The commando group stormed Abu Jihad's home in the Sidi Abu Abu Sa'id quarter on the northern edge of Tunis and opened fire on him with pistols equipped with silencers.

Another story says the members of the commando group killed Abu Jihad using machineguns and that Abu Jihad tried to resist before getting killed. The commando group, which also killed three of Abu Jihad's body guards, managed to flee.

Ibrahim al-Sus, director of the PLO office in Paris, pointed the finger of suspicion at Israel since Abu Jihad was the man in charge of military operations in the occupied territories. Al-Sus revealed that the PLO had received information about a month ago about Israel's intention to assassinate Yasir 'Arafat or any of his closest aides, such as Abu Jihad, Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf], and Faruq Qaddumi.

New information which we have just received from a Palestinian source said the commando group consisted of six members, including a woman, and not eight members.

Abu Jihad 'Threatened'

LD160757 Paris Domestic Service in French 0600 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] The PLO No 2, Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], was assassinated in Tunis this morning. It was 0200 today when an eight-man commando team attacked Abu Jihad's home. The commandos also killed two of his bodyguards. In the view of the PLO representative to Paris, Ibrahim al-Sus, there is no doubt this action was carried out by the Israelis. Here is his telephone statement recorded by Jean-Louis Courleu:

[Begin recording] [Al-Sus] An Israeli commando entered the Tunis home of Abu Jihad—a PLO leader, Fatah's No 2, and one of the founders of the movement—around 0200 this morning and coldly killed him in front of his family.

[Courleu] Was he feeling threatened lately?

[Al-Sus] Yes, quite. We knew since the beginning of the popular uprising in the occupied lands that Abu Jihad, who was particularly dealing with this area, was himself particularly threatened. He—himself, Yasir 'Arafat, Faruq Qaddumi, and Abu Iyad [Salah Khalaf]— all four of them had learned that the Israelis might attack them. [end recording]

Abu Jihad, the leader of the Fatah military branch, was Yasir 'Arafat's right hand and was in charge of the occupied territories.

Israel 'Officially Accused'

JN160815 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0757 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Tunis, 16 Apr (WAKH)—The PLO has officially accused Israel of planning the assassination of Khalil al-Wazir, also known as Abu Jihad, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revoution Forces, in Tunis at dawn today. The PLO's statement, distributed in Tunis this morning, said Al-Wazir's martyrdom will increase the Palestinian revolution's determination to continue struggle until victory is achieved. Unidentified men assassinated Al-Wazir and killed three guards this morning. TAP said earlier today that 70 bullets were fired at the Palestinian official.

WAKH Describes Attack

JN160924 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0852 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Tunis, 16 Apr (WAKH)—It has been learned from a Palestinian source in Tunis that the armed men who assassinated Khalil al-Wazir, also known as Abu Jihad, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, today used two minibuses which carried them to an area close to Abu Jihad's house. The source informed WAKH in Tunis that the group which came in these 2 buses consisted of 10 persons wearing uniforms. Seven of the group, including a woman, got off the buses. The source added that the group killed three of Abu Jihad's guards. Two of the guards were Palestinians and the other was a Tunisian.

The source disclosed that the woman was filming the incident with a video camera. This was reported by the servant of the victim. The servant said she saw flashlights, not ordinary lights.

It was mentioned that the incident took place at 0130, Tunisia local time, while Abu Jihad was preparing some official papers in preparation to leave for Baghdad today, Saturday. He noticed the group's presence, carried his pistol, and met them face to face near his bedroom. He exchanged fire with them and they hit him in one of his hands. The source added that the killers put the daughter of the Palestinian official in a room with her mother.

A foreign newspaper said the Israeli Mosad was preparing to assassinate a Palestinian personality.

'Violent Demonstrations' Noted

NC161039 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] The PLO has eulogized Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, who was assassinated at the hands of criminals in his house in Tunis at dawn today. The eulogy statement says in part: A great hero of our Arab nation and a steadfast struggler of the world liberation movement fell as a martyr today at the hands of the racist and facist faction—the Israeli rulers.

The statement added: The enemy is completely wrong if it believes that it can extinguish the flame of our revolution blazing in all Palestine by this act. The statement further says: Let this gang, which rules the Zionist entity that feeds and helps it, realize that your pure blood and the blood of all the pious martyrs will not be in vain.

PLO representative in Paris Ibrahim al-Sus was the first to announce the martyrdom of Abu Jihad. He said in his statement: After the failure to quell the revolution of stones, which is led by Palestinian children, Israel has resorted to the weapon of terrorism. Abu Jihad's assassination is a grave crime which will not go unpunished.

The Unified National Command in the occupied territory has declared a 3-day general strike as of this morning in mourning for Abu Jihad. Immediately after the report of the assassination spread, violent demonstrations were staged throughout the occupied territory. According to international reports, at least eight Palestinians were wounded by the bullets of the occupation forces during the demonstrations, which were staged in the Jabaliyah and Khan Yunis camps, where martyr Abu Jihad lived for a long time.

'Microbuses' Found

JN161123 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1037 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Tunis, 16 Apr (INA)—An INA correspondent has learned that the Tunisian security organs have found three microbuses [preceding word in English] in the Qamart area, overlooking the sea, 30 km to the east of Tunis, the capital. Arab diplomatic sources said the perpetrators of the assassination operation used three vehicles and that the passengers of one of the vehicles circled the Sidi Abu Sa'id area where Abu Jihad's [Khalil al-Wazir's] house is located while the other two vehicles carried out the assassiantion operation.

The PLO affirmed that the Zionist intelligence organ, the Mosad, carried out the assassination of Abu Jihad.

Al-Sa'iqah Pledges Vengeance

NC161316 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] The Al-Sa'iqah Forces General Command has issued a statement in Beirut condmening the assassination of marytyr Khalil al-Wazir. The statement described him as a struggler and valiant leader in the arena of Palestinian national struggle. This criminal act, the Al-Sa'iqah Command asserted, is directed against all Palestinian strugglers. The statement pledged to avenge the blood of the leader Khalil al-Wazir.

AFP on Attack

NC161408 Paris AFP in English 1402 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Tunis, April 16 (AFP)--A group of commandos who early Saturday assassinated the Palestine Liberation Organization's (PLO) top military official here included a woman who filmed the event, PLO officials said.

The nine-person assassination team that killed Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad, a close associate of PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat, was also reported to have cut his telephone line half an hour before the dawn attack.

Reporters on the scene confirmed hours later that the line was still out of order, adding that the police station at Sidi Abu Sa'id, where Mr. Wazir lived in the suburbs of Tunis, also had its lines cut. The lines were apparently severed with sophisticated electronic devices that caused no visible damage, PLO sources said.

Tunisian police Saturday found three vehicles on the beach at Rawad—40 kilometers (25 miles) north of the capital—that the assassins had rented, reporters at the scene said, leading to speculation that the assassins may have fled the country by sea.

Two white Volkswagen mini-buses and a Peugeot 305 were abandoned on the beach, police sources said. Officials later launched an investigation and dusted the cars for fingerprints.

An initial investigation indicated that the vehicles were rented to three people with Lebanese passports. Two were reportedly registered at a Tunis hotel and the third stayed at the Radwan Beach Hotel.

Police officials prevented reporters from photographing the vehicles, while specially trained police dogs sniffed around the cars, followed the scent to a nearby hotel and returned to the abandoned cars.

Witnesses told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE that a third mini-bus was parked near the hotel. A hotel doorman confirmed that a group of unidentified persons had entered the vehicle early Saturday and driven off. Tunisian authorities have set up roadblocks and checkpoints throughout the country, reporters said.

PLO on Israeli Denial

NC161505 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1306 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, 16 Apr (MENA)—Salim al-Za'nun (Abu al-Adib), PNC deputy speaker and PLO representative in Kuwait, has revealed that the decision to assassinate Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad), deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution forces, was made by the Israeli Inner Cabinet immediately after the Dimona operation in the Negev.

In an exclusive statement to the MENA correspondent in Kuwait today, Abu al-Adib said that Israel has sent more than one group to assassinate Palestinian officials in the area and that two groups have recently been detained in Baghdad.

Abu al-Adib said the assassination took place following statements by Israeli Minister of State Ari'el Sharon on 9 April that the way to end the uprising is to send the aircraft once again to hit the PLO commands in Tunisia or to use the sharp teeth of the Israeli Mosad.

The Palestinian official said that the group which assassinated Abu Jihad in Tunis at dawn today used two minibuses. One of the terrorists' accent indicated that he was a Jew speaking poor Arabic. Abu al-Adib also referred to a statement by [Israeli Prime Minister] Shamir's security adviser 5 days ago that Israel will send groups to assassinate Palestinian leaders.

The Palestinian official affirmed that Abu Jihad's assassination will not affect the course of the Palestinian uprising, because those who plan and carry out the uprising now are the students of Abu Jihad in the struggle and that Israel's decision to suppress and end the uprising has failed.

Abu al-Adib pointed out that the PLO has been abiding by the principles of the Cairo Declaration [in which the PLO pledged not to attack Israeli targets abroad], noting that the Palestinian Command will not remain silent after today.

He said that Israeli officials' denial today of Israel's connection with the incident is a familiar method. They used it when they assassinated the three PLO officials in Cyprus and have used it since they assassinated the members of the PLO Executive Committee in 1972.

Palestinians Denounce Killing

JN161657 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1555 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Damascus, 16 Apr (SANA)—Palestinian organizations and figures residing in Damascus have denounced the assassination of Khalil al-Wazir, Fatah Central Committee member, in Tunis today. Khalid al-Fahum, [former] PNC speaker, announced the death of Al-Wazir, who was murdered by the treacherous Zionist hand, emphasizing that the people of Palestine will pursue the armed struggle until the realization of the national and pan-Arab goals of liberation and victory.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front has denounced the murder, calling it a desperate attempt to undermine the will of the Palestinian Arab people, dramatized by the uprising in the occupied land.

The Popular Liberation War Vanguards-Al-Sa'iqah Forces Organization has denounced the murder, branding it a dastardly action directed against all Palestinian revolutionaries and strugglers, coming as it did after the Palestinian Arab people in the occupied homeland have intensified their struggle and after the uprising has entered its 5th month.

'Arafat Arrives in Tunis

JN161732 Bahgdad INA in Arabic 1718 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Tunis, 16 Apr (INA)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat arrived here today. Immediately after his arrival, he met with the Palestinian leaders, who briefed him on details of the assassination of Khalil al-Wazir, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, at dawn today.

Al-Wazir's 'Martyrdom' Mourned

JN161743 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1544 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Statement issued by the PLO Central Committee and Fatah Central Committee mourning Khalil al-Wazir, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, who was assassinated in Tunis on 16 April; place not given]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with God. Of them some have completed their vow to the extreme, and some still wait: but they have never changed their determination in the least. [Koranic verses]

To our Palestinian masses inside and outside our occupied homeland, to the masses of our blessed uprising, to our Arab masses everywhere, to the Arab and Palestinian fighters who are steadfastly resisting invasions of the Arab nation, to all those who fight for freedom, for the dignity and freedom of their nations and peoples in this world:

The PLO Executive Committee and the Central Committee of the Palestine National Liberation Movement-Fatah mourn a great hero of the Arab nation, a dauntless struggler of the world liberation movement, and a sublime symbol of the Palestinian national struggle, the mujahid Khalil al-Wazir, Abu Jihad, Fatah Central Committee member and deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian revolution forces who was martyred at

dawn today by the hands of the fascist, racist Israeli ruling clique which is plunging to their ears in a sea of Palestnian blood, the blood of Palestinian children, women, and old men who raised the homeland's banner, upheld freedom, and broke the chains of the Zionist occupation bondage.

O masses of our heroic people, O masses of our Arab nation, the martyrdom of the leader Abu Jihad will only increase the flames of our people's revolution and enhance our resolve and determination to continue our struggle until victory is realized. This struggle, which was sustained by the blood of our martyrs and in which our people never stopped to sacrifice their lives, continues to offer martyrs inside and outside the homeland. Today, these martyrs are led by the leader and the symbol, martyr Abu Jihad, who, along with his beloved comrade martyrs, is fueling the seething popular revolution in our occupied land. This revolution is being led by our new leaders in our great revolution and mammoth march. Let the banner of struggle continue to be high to realize freedom, honor, and victory.

O people in the occupied land, the leader and symbol Abu Jihad has fallen. All of us are proceeding on the path of martyrs and marrtydom because it is the road of freedom, strength, and victory. The enemy will be under an illusion if it imagines that through such actions it will be able to extinguish our revolution which is burning all over Palestine. The enemy did not know that the blood of our martyrs will increase our people's determination to continue struggle until victory is realized.

God said: Fain would they extinguish God's light with their mouths, but God will not allow but that his light should be perfected, even though the believers may detest. [Koranic verses]

We pledge to you, Abu Jihad, that we will continue the struggle to which you have been devoting your efforts and sweat from the beginning and to which you are now devoting your chaste, precious blood. We pledge to you that the revolution and the uprising will continue strong and victorious as you wanted it to be and to realize what you have struggled for. We pledge to you Abu Jihad, a pledge of revolutionaries, freedom fighters, mujahidin, and strugglers. Let this gang, which is ruling the Zionist entity, and let those who back, feed, and support it know that your chaste blood and the blood of our martyrs will not go in vain.

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. God hath purchased of the believers their persons and their goods for theirs in return is the garden of paradise. They fight in his cause and sally and are slain: A promise binding on him in truth, through the law, the Gospel, and the Koran. And who is more faithful to his covenant than God? Then rejoice in the bargain which ye have concluded; that is the achievement supreme. [Koranic verses]

Revolution until victory.

Klibi Condemns 'Gruesome Act'

JN161836 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1730 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Chedli Klibi, the secretary general of the Arab League, has given a statement to our station on the murder of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir]:

[Begin recording] The murder of the great mujahid Khalil al-Wazir not only ranks as a despicable crime added to the countless crimes committed by the Mosad against the Palestinian people, this gruesome act is directed against peace, of which Abu Jihad was a key champion and a most able planner. Once again Israel's friends and champions, with the U.S. Government topping the list, are being provided with evidence that it is Israel that perpetrates ugly, terrorist crimes and spurns peace and works through every means possible to abort all attempts aimed at bringing it nearer. Is it not time that those who extend unlimited support to the state sponsoring terrorism and assassination awoke? [end recording]

'Arafat Speaks on Assassination

JN162032 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2000 GMT 16 Apr 88

[From the "Panorama" program]]

[Text] We will begin our "Panorama" program for tonight, which is almost all devoted to Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], with the telephone call which we received a few minutes ago from PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat. From Tunis, where he arrived this evening, 'Arafat addressed this call through our radio:

[Begin recording] Undoubtedly, I address this short statement to my kinfolk and beloved ones in our occupied territories and to all my brothers and comrades-in-arms. I tell them that today one of the symbols of Palestinian struggle was martyred. He is brother and comrade martyr leader Abu Jihad.

However, I tell them that his final abode will be paradise, that his blood will not flow away uselessly, and that if this Israeli enemy and its strategic allies that support it believe they can quell this blessed uprising or strike at the revolution, then they are deluded because our people's will, faith, and determination will turn the ground into flames under the feet of the occupiers and this land is watered by the blood of Abu Jihad and the blood of all his righteous martyrs, the martyrs of the blessed uprising, the martyrs of the Palestinian revolution, and the martyrs of our Arab and Islamic nations.

These martyrs are candles that light our road until the Palestinian flag is hoisted on the walls, minarets, and churches of Jerusalem. If a wound hath touched you, be sure a similar wound hath touched the others. Such days

(of varying fortunes) we give to men and men by turns: that God may know those that believe, and that He may take to Himself from your ranks martyr-witnesses (to Truth). And God loveth not those that do wrong. [Koranic verses; parentheses from Koran]

O my brothers, our road is difficult and long. However, we will triumph, triumph, triumph. We will triumph by the determination of all freemen and honest people and by the blood of those righteous martyrs. Let us be together until victory, victory, victory. Farewell O Abu Jihad. Farewell to you, O righteous martyrs. [end recording]

PFLP-GC Statement

JN170726 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1600 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] The PFLP-GC Political Bureau has issued a statement which says:

The PFLP-GC Political Bureau has pondered the criminal and terrorist act committed by the Zionist-U.S. enemy and its services in assassinating the martyred leader Khalil al-Wazir in Tunisia. The PFLP-GC Political Bureau condemns the criminal act and views it as being directed against all Palestinian strugglers and all the strugglers in all the factions of the Palestinian revolution. It holds the Zionist terrorist services and the Zionist enemy leaders responsible for the bloody consequences of the assassination.

The PFLP-GC Political Bureau vows to the souls of the martyrs of the Palestinian revolution and the martyrs of the Arab nation to continue the armed struggle until our revolution's goals in liberating the land and man are achieved. PFLP-GC Secretary General Ahmad Jibril also sent a condolence cable to the martyr's family.

[Signed] The PFLP-GC

DFLP Official on Attack

JN171035 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1000 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Salih Ra'fat, DFLP Political Bureau member and member of the Higher Committee for the Occupied Homeland, said today the crime committed by the Israeli and U.S. intelligence services in assassinating the leader Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] is a desperate attempt to undermine the Palestinian people's uprising in the occupied territory. He asserted the coming days will be among the most violent in the days of confrontation between the Palestinian masses and the occupation army. He said enemy leaders will not escape punishment.

'Uprising' Leadership Statement

JN171652 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1545 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Statement issued 17 April by the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising in the occupied territories mourning Khalil al-Wazir, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, who was assassinated in Tunis on 16 April; place not given]

[Text] Call. Call, Call. No voice can rise above the voice of the uprising. No voice can rise above the voice of the Palestinian people, the people of the PLO. Think not of those who are slain in God's way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord. [Koranic verses]

The Unified National Leadership of the Uprising in the occupied territories, the PLO leadership, mourn with the masses of our Palestinian people everywhere the great hero martyr Brother Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces and Fatah Central Committee member, who was assassinated in Tunis on 16 April while he was performing his revolutionary and militant duty, by the bullets of the neo-Nazis in an attempt to find a way out of their stifling impasse and to quell the gigantic uprising of our people.

The Unified National Leadership of the Uprising calls on our people to stage a 3-day strike as of Sunday, 17 April 1988, to hoist the black and Palestinian flags in all places and on all houses, and to turn these days into [words indistinct]. These crimes and assassinations will only strengthen our adherence to the PLO, our sole and legitimate representative and the leader of our struggle. They will also strengthen our determination to march ahead with our mighty popular revolution.

We pledge to our hero martyr leader that we will continue the road he walked and to avenge his pure blood until the objectives and rights of our people of repatriation, self-determination, and the establishment of the independent Palestinian state under the PLO are achieved. Glory and immortality to our hero martyr leader Kkhalil al-Wazir—Abu Jihad—and to all Paleestinian martyrs. Long live the glorious Palestinianm uprising. Long live the PLO, a sole and legitimate representative of our heroic people. Revolution until victory!

Signed, the PLO, the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising in the occupied territories, 17 April 1988

Al-Wazir's Wife Interviewed

JN171837 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1708 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Telephone interview with Intisar al-Wazir, identified here by her nom de guerre Umm Jihad, wife of Khalil al-Wazir, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, who was assassinated in Tunis on 16 April, by Nabil Darwish on 17 April; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Darwish] Can you tell us about the circumstances of the assassination of Palestinian leader Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] at dawn yesterday?

[Al-Wazir] The truth is that Abu Jihad was sitting at his desk in the bedroom. He was writing a message to the strugglers. I slept 15 minutes before the incident. I heard a quick movement. I woke up and I saw him carrying his pistol and going toward the room's door. I went after him. He stood in a corner of the outside room. He opened fire. I saw four gunmen in front of me carrying machineguns. He began firing, then they opened fire from their machineguns. They fired in a very rancorous way. After each one of them had emptied his magazine, he retreated and the other advanced to continue the task. The four of them fired at him. One of them directed his machinegun at me. I turned my face against the wall and I asked God to give me martyrdom, but they left me without having the honor of martyrdom with him.

[Darwish] Did they say anything?

[Al-Wazir] They did not say anything. However, before they left the house, they went to the bedroom where the small child was sleeping in his bed in the room. They showered the room with bullets, including the wall over the child.

[Darwish] Umm Jihad, some stories said the murderers recorded the assassination on a video cassette?

[Al-Wazir] I did not see this because I was waiting for them to fire at me. I closed my eyes and I did not see such a thing.

[Darwish] Was Abu Jihad able to fire some bullets?

[Al-Wazir] Yes, he fired one bullet only.

[Darwish] Fired one bullet?

[Al-Wazir] Yes.

[Darwish] Some stories said that the first bullets were fired at his hand. Is this true?

[Al-Wazir] Yes, his hand was full of bullets. More than 75 bullets in his body from head to toe. I told you they fired at him rancorously. Even after they entered the bedroom and opened fire on the wall near the child, they left the room and fired at him again.

[Darwish] Umm Jihad, the date of Abu Jihad's funeral has not so far been set. Has a date been set and where?

[Al-Wazir] I prefer that this be in some place close to the homeland. I prefer it to be in Jerusalem, but this is a weak possibility. The closest possible to the homeland.

[Darwish] Umm Jihad, do you have information about the network that perpetrated and assassinated Abu Jihad?

[Al-Wazir] We do not have any information. However, I can positively say that they were the Israeli Mosad.

[Darwish] Is there anything new regarding the investigations being carried out by the Palestinian and Tunisian sides?

[Al-Wazir] Nothing new so far and investigations are continuing.

[Darwish] Umm Jihad, you have lived with Abu Jihad as his wife and in his struggle. You are an old struggler in the Fatah Movement. How do you expect the situation to be after the assassination of leader Abu Jihad?

[Al-Wazir] I expect that Fatah will be born again. The martyrdom of Abu Jihad with these treacherous bullets will create the revolution again, will renew the revolution. Abu Jihad has not died. Abu Jihad lives in the hearts and minds of all the sons of our Palestinian people, the Arab nation, and all free strugglers in the world, because he struggled for a just caause. We lost him as a family. However, his people and cause lost him as a struggler, leader, and a symbol of these people's struggle. His martyrdom, blood, and the blood of our children and youths inside the occupied territory, who were martyred yesterday and today under the circumstances of the martyrdom of Abu Jihad, and those who insisted on martyrdom as an expression of their denunciation of this hideous crime. [sentence incomplete as heard] I am confident that this revolution—including its men, women, children, youths, and elders—will triumph.

[Darwish] The last question, Umm Jihad: Did you find any will? Has Abu Jihad left any will and what is this will?

[Al-Wazir] Abu Jihad's will has always advocated that we must always work to bolster our struggle and to serve our people wherever we may be to be a true struggler. We must continue with the revolution to achieve victory and liberate Palestine.

AFP: 'Arafat Blames Israel

NC172016 Paris AFP in English 2013 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Tunis, April 17 (AFP)—The United States approved the murder Saturday of Abu Jihad, the Palestine Liberation Organization's (PLO) second in command, PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat charged here Sunday.

He said the murder of his deputy was "an Israeli decision taken at the highest level and with the green light of the American Administration, Israel's strategic ally."

Mr. 'Arafat, in a message addressed to Palestinians in the Israeli-ocupied territories, vowed: "Those who think the assassination of Abu Jihad will smother the Palestinian uprising are deceiving themselves.

"His death will give new life to this heroic revolt. The blood of Abu Jihad will be dearly paid for." [passage omitted]

Al-Wazir Burial in Damascus

JN181028 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1000 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] The body of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] will be buried in Damascus tomorrow. Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad has agreed to allow Palestinian leaders, including Yasir 'Arafat, to come to Damascus to attend the funeral.

'Arafat Said Behind Killing

LD181037 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1408 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Beirut, April 17 (TANJUG)—Lebanon's political public and some 500,000 Palestinian refugees living in that country most strongly condemn yesterday's assassination in Tunisia of Abu Jihad, one of the leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and accuse Israel of the killing. [passage omitted]

Reports that Israeli anti-terrorist specialists accuse PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat of killing his closest military aide were received with unbelief and shock among observers in Beirut today. Namely, Tel Aviv University Professor Ari'el Merari said that Abu Jihad, deputy commander of the PLO Armed Forces, fell as a victim of inter-rivalry struggles within the PLO.

Algeria

Reportage on Hijack Situation 15-18 Apr

'Intense Negotiations' 15 Apr

LD151955 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Intensified negotiations are being conducted at Houari Boumedienne International Airport where the diverted Kuwaiti airliner has been grounded for 3 days. Intense negotiations are being held between the Algerian mediating side and those who diverted the airliner. We go straight over to the radio correspondent:

[Unidentified correspondent] Yes Mohamed, there are many comings and goings taking place at Houari Boumedienne International Airport between the VIP lounge and the diverted Kuwaiti airliner. Intense contacts are being held between the Algerian negotiators and those who diverted the Kuwaiti airliner.

The fifth contact between one of the Algerian negotiators and those who diverted the Kuwaiti airliner took place at 1810 and lasted till 1832. Previous contact took place around 1600 and lasted till 1640. Before that, two contacts took place this morning.

The radio's correspondent, in spite of intense efforts and insistent questioning of some officials, has been unable to ascertain the content of the negotiations. However, in monitoring the situation it has become apparent that there has been intensified contact between the Algerian negotiators, the Kuwaiti delegation, and those who diverted the airliner. [passage omitted]

The hijackers' stand was also made known through the two messages made this afternoon by two hostages; let us listen to them again:

[Begin recording] [First hostage] In the name of Allah, the merciful, the compassionate. I am Sulayman Muhammad Sulayman al-Mujari. First of all my greetings to my family, my relatives, and anyone who asks about me. Second, I appeal to the Kuwaiti authorities to free the 17 persons being detained in Kuwait's prisons because of the hijackers' insistence that if they were not going to free those who are detained in Kuwait's prisons they will kill us. Thank you.

[Second hostage] In the name of Allah, the merciful, the compassionate. I am Muhammad Mufarrah Hamad al-'Ajmi, one of the hostages aboard the Kuwaiti airliner. My greetings and salutations to all my family, the old ones and the young ones. I appeal to the Kuwaiti authorities to free the prisoners who are behind bars in Kuwaiti jails because the hijackers are still insisting on their demand. We pray to Almighty God that the Kuwaiti authorities will meet their demand as the hijackers will otherwise proceed and kill us. Allah's peace, prayers, and benedictions be upon you. [end recording]

Thus, the negotiations at Houari Boumedienne Airport are continuing.

Cyprus Statement Denied

NC152153 Paris AFP in English 2140 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Algiers, April 15 (AFP)—Algeria never gave the Cyprus authorities any assurance that the hostages aboard the Kuwaiti airliner would be released when the plane arrived in Algiers, it was officially announced here late Friday.

The statement denied another by the Cyprus Government that the hijacked Kuwait Airlines Boeing 747 had only been allowed to take off from Larnaca, Cyprus, after the reported assurances were given by Algiers.

Algeria agreed to allow the hijacked plane to land at Algiers international airport earlier this week "at the explicit request of the Kuwait Government and for strictly humanitarian reasons," a government statement said.

It added that the Algerian authorities continued to "deploy every effort" to resolve the hijack crisis, now on its 11th day, but that they had not put forward "any guarantee" that the hostages would be freed. [passage omitted]

'Pressure' on Kuwait Denied

LD152337 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 2245 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] Algiers, 15 Apr KUNA—The Kuwaiti minister of state for foreign affairs, Mr Sa'ud al-'Usaymi, has denied allegations—which have been attributed to a member of the Kuwaiti delegation in Algeria—of the existance of Algerian pressure on Kuwait "to adopt a more flexible stand" in the negotiations going on here to end the Kuwaiti Airways hijack crisis.

Mr al-'Usaymi, leader of the Kuwaiti delegation which arrived here last Thursday, said that what one of the news agencies attributed to a member of the delegation "has no basis in truth." In a press statement here tonight, he added that neither he nor any member of the Kuwaiti delegation, from the moment they arrived in Algeria up until now, had met any Arab or foreign journalist.

The minister stressed that "the brother Algerian officials are continuing their efforts to cope with the hijacking of the Kuwaiti plane with great wisdom and patience, and Kuwait has great confidence in their efforts."

Mr al-'Usaymi warned against the leaking of such untrue news, which is bound to divert world attention from the core of the issue—which is putting a peaceful end to this operation—to peripheral matters which have nothing to do with the truth.

The minister concluded his statement by saying "it is sad that this regrettable plane incident has happened (at this time) when it diverts the interest of the world media from what our brothers in the occupied territories are suffering in their uprising and confrontation with the Zionist enemy, which has pushed the Arab nation's most important issue to the center of world attention."

News Conference Arranged 16 Apr

LD161418 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1345 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Unscheduled dispatch from Houari Boumedienne Airport]

[Excerpt] Finally, agreement has been reached and foreign journalists have reached a compromise solution by appointing two representatives; the first represents the English-speaking press—that is to say British and U.S. press—and he is of U.S. nationality and works for the NEW YORK TIMES; and the other represents the French-speaking press, and she is from AFP.

Meanwhile, the national press is being represented by one journalist from the APS, while it had been decided earlier that two journalists should be sent in; one from national television and the other from APS.

Precisely 2 minutes ago, a Land Rover carrying the three journalists with a driver and a security man started moving toward the plane. At the moment, I can see that the plane's steps are being placed in front of the forward door of the Kuwaiti Boeing 747, situated about 500 meters from the airport VIP lounge. The door has not yet been opened. The steps are in place. There is normal movement; some security men—either in official uniform or in civlian clothes. The second car which accompanied the Land Rover is returning with some members of the Algerian delegation in it. It is returning here to its place in front of the VIP lounge.

What is important is that one person entered the plane and the door has remained open until now, while the group of journalists remains in the Land Rover some 30 meters away. At any rate, the news conference was delayed because it was supposed to be held at 1330 but there was a dispute among the foreign journalists—between the English speakers and the French speakers. The French-speaking journalists were not happy with the choice of representatives—the draw came up with two English speakers: a man from the BBC and an American journalists from the NEW YORK TIMES. The French speakers did not like the result, as I have said, and demanded a reconsideration of the matter. Of course, the matter remained confined to the foreign journalists, and the Algerian authorities did not intervene in the matter. The foreign journalists finally reached a compromise by appointing two journalists: The NEW YORK TIMES journalist and a woman from AFP.

The person is descending from the plane, and the door is shut. We do not know the result of this meeting and this talk between the Algerian person and the hijacker of the plane who spoke to him at the door. [passage omitted]

Hijackers Speak to Journalists

LD161742 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1702 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] We are trying to contact brother Abdelnour at Houari Boumedienne Airport for a report on the latest developments in the Kuwaiti plane issue.

[Unidentified correspondent] The most important thing that has happened regarding the hijacked Kuwaiti plane here at Houari Boumedienne International Airport is the news conference held by the plane's hijackers with three journalists; the first from APS, who was representing Algerian and the Arab press, the second from the NEW YORK TIMES, representing the English-speaking press, and the third from AFP, representing the French-speaking press.

The news conference lasted around 17 minutes and was held at the plane's entrance. The journalists sat on the upper platform of the plane's staircase and one of the hijackers spoke to them while standing by the door, mostly answering the questions after consulting his colleagues. The most important thing that emerged from this news conference was the hijackers' insistence on their demands which they made at the beginning—namely the release of 17 of their colleagues who are prisoners in Kuwait. We have selected the following excerpt from the news conference for you, in which they specify their demands.

[Begin hijacker recording] [Words indistinct] following the Kuwaiti intransigence, we are asking our brother Algerians to refuel the plane for departure, because we will settle our account with Kuwait elsewhere. [end recording]

In reply to a question from one of the journalists on the possibility of talks on another solution, the hijacker replied on behalf of his colleagues that any solution proposed will be discussed with the Algerian officials and will be studied [words indistinct]

U.S. Denounced

LD162013 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Excerpts] [Announcer 'Abd al-Qadir] We will try to learn of any new developments concerning the hijacked Kuwaiti plane through our direct contact with the radio correspondent at Houari Boumedienne International Airport:

[Unidentified correspondent] Hello, 'Abd al-Qadir. The hijacked Kuwaiti plane is parked at Houari Boumedienne International Airport for the 4th successive day.

A new round of negotiations between the Algerian delegation and the hijackers of the plane is currently underway. One of the Algerian negotiators climbed up to the plane at 1925 this evening, about 20 minutes ago. This is the second round of talks today, and follows that which took place from 1035 to 1300 this morning.

This evening's round of negotiations comes about 4 hours after the conclusion of the news conference, which lasted 17 minutes, or from 1503 to 1520. [passage omitted]

At the beginning of the news conference, a spokesman for the hijackers read out a statement which he said was addressed from the plane of martyrdom to the Islamic nation and in which the hijackers specially denounced U.S. policy in the Islamic world and the U.S. schemes to destabilize the area through its step daughter, Israel. They have also denounced the assassination of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian revolution forces. The hijackers renewed their stand on this issue at the news conference. Let us listen together to the hijackers' spokesman:

[Begin recording of unidentified spokesman for the hijackers speaking in Arabic with a Lebanese accent] We are set on the release of our 17 brothers in Kuwait, and because of Kuwaiti intransigence, we ask our Algerian brothers to refuel the plane so that we may depart. We will settle our account with the Kuwaitis in another place. [end recording]

[Correspondent] To the question: Does the keeping of hostages contradict with the tolerant teaching of the Islamic religion, especially since we are on the advent of holy month of Ramadan? The spokesman answered the following:

[Begin recording of spokesman] We would have preferred not to use this method. However, we are forced to so that the Kuwaiti Government will take our demands seriously. However, we are capable of distinguishing between the civilians and the military men and those of authority in Kuwait who are in the plane. [end recording]

[Correspondent] This was the most important point that came out of the news conference held this afternoon and which was awaited by everyone. Anyway, the second round of negotiations has continued since 1925 this evening between one of the Algerian negotiators and the hijackers of the plane. Awaiting the return of this negotiator, I leave you for now. Back to you 'Abd al-Qadir.

Set Refueling Deadline

LD170815 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 0800 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] There has been a new development concerning the hijacked Kuwaiti airliner, grounded in Houari Boumedienne Airport. Contact was made by the hijackers of the aircraft at 0740 Algerian time [0640 GMT] with the airport control tower demanding that the aircraft be fully fuelled by 1100 Algerian time.

Extend Departure Deadline

LD171235 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1210 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Algiers 17 Apr (KUNA)—One of the hijackers made contact through the control tower with the Algerian negotiators a few moments ago and told them in Arabic that they have decided to extend the deadline they had previously set to leave Algerian territory following "a request by the Algerian brothers."

The hijackers spoke in English about 20 minutes ago and asked whether they were going to be supplied with the necessary fuel to leave Algerian soil. The previous contact was made in English; the control tower replied, however, that it was still awaiting guidance as far as the fuel is concerned. The second contact was made in Arabic and asserted the hijackers' decision to extend the deadline. However, no time was given for the new deadline.

'Sources' on Refueling

JN170831 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0805 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Algiers, 17 Apr (WAKH)—Sources at Houari Boumedienne Airport in Algiers have told the WAKH correspondent here that the hijacked Kuwaiti airliner Al-Jabiriyah will be supplied with only 10 [as received] tonnes of fuel before 1100 today, Algiers time.

The sources said that this quantity of fuel will be enough to keep only two of the four engines running in order ensure the continued operation of the air conditioning system in the airliner.

Kuwait asked the Algerian Government yesterday not to allow the hijacked airliner to leave Algeria and to safeguard the lives of its innocent passengers.

Police Take Up Positions

NC171435 Paris AFP in English 1436 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Algiers, April 17 (AFP)—Police took up positions Sunday on the rooftops of Algiers airport facing a hijacked Kuwaiti airliner that has been on the tarmac since Wednesday, correspondents said.

Journalists and cameramen were forced to evacuate the press centre as security forces moved in suddenly and without warning, standing in positions some 300 metres (yards) from the Boeing 747.

The police officers did not appear to be armed, according to a correspondent at the scene.

The hijackers, on the 13th day of the ordeal, had earlier issued a morning deadline for the aircraft to be refuelled but extended it to allow Algeria to resume its mediation with a Kuwaiti delegation at the airport.

Airport authorities later delivered food to the aircraft, using rope to raise the supplies to the cabin door.

The hijackers have been demanding the release of 17 Islamic militants imprisoned in Kuwait. There was no indication that the authorities were about to step up pressure on the hijackers, as the police who had climbed onto the rooftops did not belong to special units and had been at the airport since earlier in the week.

The order for journalists to be evacuated from the VIP building could either be linked to the imminent arrival of a prominent official or because the authorities had wanted the building cleared for a special meeting, correspondents believed.

Journalists were allowed to continue their work nearby and were not forced to leave the airport.

Hostage's Plea to Kuwait

LD171619 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Contact is going on now between an Algerian negotiator and the hijackers of the Kuwaiti airliner. Contact began at 1644, about 15 minutes ago. The contact is the second today, after that which took place at 1100. At 1620 we recorded the contact between the airliner and the control tower. The person who spoke was one of the hostages, Kuwaiti citizen Awadh Farhan Dawkhi, who said: I send greetings to the people of Kuwait and to my family, and ask the Government of Kuwait to release the 17 prisoners at the earliest time possible; otherwise, our end will be black.

The hijackers, after the message, asked for today's newspapers. [words indistinct] the control tower replied: Your request is accepted. Therefore, we are waiting for the emergence of the Algerian negotiator who is on board the airliner [passage indistinct]

Hijackers Request Meal

LD172010 Algiers Domestic Service in French 2000 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] There is still nothing new this evening in the matter of the Kuwaiti 747. The hijackers have just asked the control tower for 45 meals, specifying that this was the suhur [last meal taken before Ramadan begins] on the eve of the month of Ramadan.

Mediator Resumes Contact

LD172108 Algiers Domestic Service in French 2100 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] In the affair of the Kuwaiti 747, there has been a third contact this evening, at exactly 2115 [2015 GMT], between the Algerian mediator and the hijackers. The Algerian negotiator remained on the aircraft for 15 minutes. This is the only news we have for the moment.

Officials Discuss Situation

LD172142 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 2100 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Sa'ud Muhammad al-'Usaymi, minister of state for foreign affairs, held discussions at Houari Boumedienne Airport in Algiers yesterday evening with Algerian Interior Minister el-Hadi Khdiri concerning the Algerian authorities' efforts to ensure the release of the passengers of the hijacked Kuwaiti plane, which has been at the airport since last Wednesday.

In the meantime, an Algerian negotiator held two sessions of talks with the hijackers. The second session took place at 1845 Kuwaiti time [1545 GMT] and lasted for half an hour. The hijackers had agreed to give the Algerian officials extra time to settle the hijack crisis, but they did not set a deadline. [passage omitted]

Role of Mediators Praised

LD180804 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 0700 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Today the hijacked Kuwaiti aircraft is spending its 6th day on the tarmac at Houari Boumedienne International Airport.

Yesterday morning there were threats to take off due to the intransigence of the two sides—the hijackers and the Kuwaiti delegation. But thanks to the efforts made by the Algerian mediators, balance was restored and this allowed the hijackers to give up the idea of taking off after they had asked for the plane to be refuelled at 1100. The Algerian efforts yesterday consisted of five meetings with the hijackers. The last of these meetings took place at 0245 and lasted 30 minutes.

Security Tightened 18 Apr

LD181056 Kuwait KUNA in English 1015 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Excerpts] Algiers 18 Apr (KUNA)—The hijacked Kuwaiti airliner is still grounded at Algiers airport, and it is expected that negotiations between its hijackers and the Algerian mediators will resume today. [passage omitted]

Security measures were tightened at Houari Boumedienne and around the aircraft; security men were deployed on top of the buildings and no reason was given.

KUNA's team in Algiers said, however, that these measures were taken in anticipation of the arrival "of a very important Arab personality" to talk to the hijackers and convince them to end the danger to the innocent aboard the aircraft.

Negotiations Said Continuing

LD181519 Algiers Television Service in Arabic 1430 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] [passage indistinct] This is the 14th day of the hijacking, and still there is nothing new. Fresh developments are expected as long as there is hope, and negotiations between both sides are continuing. Bringing the stairs near the plane has become a usual thing, and so has the visit of the Algerian negotiator to the plane here at Houari Boumedienne Airport. However, waiting has been accompanied by boredom, something that has led to the circulation of rumors and the fabrication of news reports by foreign journalists. These journalists tend to interpret any move and raise issues that have nothing to do with the plane's diversion.

Despite all this, the Algerian negotiator has had another round of negotiations with the plane's diverters. Through this, Algeria tirelessly endeavors to put an end to this issue, and provides conditions that may bring about a satisfactory conclusion to this dilemma.

Only a few minutes ago, one of the hostages, (Fadil al-Sabah), spoke to the control tower. He reiterated the demand of the plane's diverters. From his speech it was noticeable that he is sick and finds difficulty in speaking.

We are closely following any fresh development concerning the diverted Kuwaiti plane.

President Cables Condolences to 'Arafat

LD161318 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 16 Apr 88

["Text" of condolence cable from President Bendjedid to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat; date not specified]

[Text] To the campaigning brother Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and commander in chief of the Palestinian revolution forces:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Count not those who were slain in God's way as dead, but rather living with their lord, by him provided. God spoke the truth. [Koranic verse]

I learned with extreme sorrow and pain the news of the assassination of Khalil al-Wazir—Abu Jihad—deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian revolution forces, this morning. While we express our strong condemnation and anger at this distressing incident, we denounce with all our might the act carried out by the hand of crime, treason, and aggression, and confirm that the blood of the martyr shall not have been shed in vain. If the late Abu Jihad has joined the long list of Palestinian martyrs, our sole solace is that he carried out the message of jihad and struggle for the sake of the sacred Palestinian cause with complete sincerity and devotion in order to achieve the firm national rights of the Palestinian people: To return to their homeland and build an independent state on their national soil under the leadership of the PLO, their sole legitimate representative.

The deceased was an example for sacrifice and teaching the Zionist enemy unforgettable heroic lessons. He left behind a generation believing in their cause and a determination to continue to carry the torch of freedom and struggle until the achievement of full victory for this heroic people. While we extend our warm condolences to you, to the noble family and relations of the martyrs, and to the Palestinian people in general, we renew to you our complete commitment to supporting the just Palestinian cause and continuing to provide all possible means in support of the Palestinian revolution. Revolution until victory.

Libya

Algerian Foreign Minister, Delegation Visit

Arrive on 2-Day Visit

LD161909 Tripoli JANA in English 1808 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, Al-Tayr [April] 16, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Dr Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, the Algerian foreign minister and member of the FLN Politburo, and the delegation in his company arrived this evening in Tripoli on a visit to Great Jamahiriyah.

Dr Taleb made a statement to JANA in which he pointed out that his visit comes within the framework of continuous consultations between the two sisterly countries in all fields and subjects. He said that his visit comes, also, at a time the Libyan Arab people is commemorating the 2nd anniversary of the barbaric aggression.

Dr Taleb referred in his statement to the assassination of Khalil Al-Wazir (Abu Jihad) saying that this is, in fact, a barbaric act. He concluded his statement by saying I am carrying the warmest greetings of the Algerian people to their Libyan Arab people and its leader.

Al-Qadhdhafi Meets Ibrahimi

LD171457 Tripoli JANA in English 1416 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, Al-Tayr [April] 17, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The leader of the revolution has received Dr Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, the Algerian foreign minister and the member of the Politburo of the FLN, who delivered to him a letter from President Chadli Bendjedid.

Discussed during the meeting were Arab and international matters of common interest considering the distinctive relations and permanent consultation and coordination between the two sisterly countries complementing the existing unionist steps between them.

Further Meeting

LD171531 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1423 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, 17 Apr, (JANA)—The brother secretary of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison conferred at noon today in Tripoli with Dr Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi, member of the FLN Political Bureau and foreign minister.

The meeting was attended by the brother secretary of the Arab homeland department, the secretary of the Arab Libyan brotherhood bureau in Algiers, and the Algerian ambassador to the Great Jamahiriyah.

Ibrahimi, Delegation Depart

LD171727 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1645 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, 17 Apr (JANA)—Dr Taleb Ibrahimi, member of the Algerian FLN Political Bureau and foreign minister of sisterly Algeria, left Tripoli this evening after the conclusion of his visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

Al-Qadhdhafi Sends Condolences on Al-Wazir Death

LD161427 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Excerpt] The brother leader of the revolution has sent a message of condolence to the family of the martyr Khalil Al-Wazir, Abu Jihad. [passage omitted]

Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Palestinian Official

LD161533 Tripoli JANA in English 1503 GMT 6 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, April 16, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The leader of the revolution has received Abu Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha], the secretary of the Palestinian National Liberation Movement—Fatah.

Al-Qadhdhafi Meets Terrorism Symposium Delegates

LD151522 Tripoli JANA in English 1420 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, Al-Tayr [April] 15, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The leader of the revolution received Mr John Ziglar, member of the Swiss Federation Council, and Mr Gasdirine John, member of the human rights committee, who are participating in the international scientific seminar about terrorism held in Tripoli under the slogan [words indistinct].

Al-Qadhdhafi Meets African Trade Unionists

LD171253 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0915 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, 17 Apr (JANA)—The brother leader of the revolution has received the secretary generals of both Namibian and South African trade unions who took part in the proceedings of the 11th session of the General Council of African Trade Unions, held in the Great Jamahiriyah.

Lebanese Delegation Arrives, Makes Statement

LD161413 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0746 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, 16 Apr (JANA)—Brothers 'Isam Qansawah, secretary general of the Lebanese Arab Socialist Ba'th Party; Mustafa Ma'ruf, leader of the Nasirite Popular Organization; and George Hawi, secretary general of the Lebanese Communist Party; arrived in Tripoli yesterday on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

Brother 'Isam Qansawah, in a statement to the JANA correspondent, indicated that this visit, taking place at a time when the Libyan Arab people are marking the 2d anniversary of their confrontation with the failed U.S.-NATO barbaric aggression, is confirmation that an agreession against the people of the Jamahiriyah and against Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi is aggression against every area.

He said: They thought that by attacking the Libyan Arab people they could destroy the legend of struggle, the legend of confrontation, the legend of building the modern state by brother Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi; however, they have failed. He noted that the great historic action by the brother leader to demolish prisons and free prisoners firmly shows that what is taking place on the soil of the Great Jamahiriyah is real democracy. He said that the Jamahiriyah, under the leadership of brother Col Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, provides material and moral support to the struggle of the Arab people in Lebanon and occupied Palestine.

JANA Rebuts Mubarak Claim of Troops on Border

LD150605 Tripoli JANA in English 1750 GMT 14 Apr 88

[Text] Tripoli, Al-Tayr [April] 14, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—JANA's political editor, remarking on the comments made by the head of the Egyptian regime, says that once more the Egyptian president makes comments that reflect truely the dilemma he is in following the pan-Arab proposals made by the leader of the revolution in his speech delivered on the 18th anniversary of the expulsion of the British bases from the Libyan Arab soil.

This time the head of the Egyptian regime resorts to a ridiculous thing when he says that Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi has reinforced the Libyan troops on the border with

Egypt during the speech delivered in Tobruk. This ridiculous allegation reveals the contradiction in the logic of the Egyptian president.

Less than 2 weeks ago, i.e., on 30th last Al-Marikh [March] he himself made comments before the world denying the presence of any troops whether Egyptians or Libyans on the two sides of the border as he said. But, this time, he says before the world at large that the Libyan troops have been reinforced on the border with Egypt during the speech made in Tobruk.

The editor points out that this confused stance reflects the embarrassment of the situation the Egyptian president has placed himself in after the announcement and the call of the leader to withdraw the troops from the region of the artificial border with Egypt calling on opening this border to the citizens of one Arab people in Great Jamahiriyah and Egypt and the implementation of the strategic pan-Arab project of connecting the valley of the Nile with the great man-made industrial river.

This embarrassment stresses the clear fact, viz, the decision to open the Egyptian border is in the hands of the U.S. and the Zionist enemy and not in the hands of the Egyptian president as this will open a door for a blame to be directed against him.

Remarking on the comments made yesterday of the Egyptian president of his rejection to an alleged proposed meeting between himself and the leader, the editor says that this allegation is quite baseless. It is a mere fabrication. Even if we accept it as true, it will represent a new condemnation against the Egyptian president in front of the rank and file of the Arab masses and in front of the rulers of the Arab nation. Let alone the entire world in that it is he that refuses to meet and come to an understanding to free Egypt from the fetters of David's Stable. It is he who condemns himself once again giving another proof of the dilemma he has placed himself in following the speech given in Tobruk.

The editor stresses we in Great Jamahiriyah reaffirm once again our adherence to the unionist pan-Arab stand announced clearly and with a revolutionary and resolute spirit that we by this address the Arab people in Egypt and to the Egyptian parties.

Let the Egyptian regime by itself dog behind searching for allegations and excuses to justify the absence of political and pan-Arab resolution by Egypt. Let this regime by itself grope its way in confusion and contradiction amid the exposure of these allegations thereby revealing their real dimensions and drives.

Sudan

Al-Mahdi Announces Government's Resignation

JN161448 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1417 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, 16 Apr (SUNA)—[Prime Minister] Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has said he has tendered his resignation and requested the State Council to relieve his government of duty. He added the State Council will make the appropriate decision on approving the resignation without creating a constitutional vacuum. He expressed that the formation of a new government will be announced the day after tomorrow, Monday [18 April].

In a statement before the Constituent Assembly today, Al-Mahdi said the country is not suffering from a crisis of rule. He added that if the issue were merely one of forming a government, it would have been possible to achieve it easily since the Constituent Assembly comprises two portions, one consisting of two-fifths and the other consisting of three-fifths, and the two-fifths can form a government along with any 20 deputies. Moreover, the government is running its affairs normally and no crisis has occurred, he said.

Al-Mahdi added: On 12 April, the country moved from alliance and coalition to the cherished reconciliation, and the issue was referred to the Constituent Assembly, which expresses the citizens' will. He said the matter under discussion is to rally the national will around the fateful issues.

Meanwhile, Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has said that all Sudanese party representatives in the Constituent Assembly with the exception of the Sudanese Communist Party have agreed on the outlines of the agreement. They are now working out other details to address the country's fateful issues, stressing that Sudan's political and democratic experiment will be a radiant source realizing its Arab, African, and Muslim potentials.

We are committed to the Islamic approach option while safeguarding non-Muslim rights, Al-Mahdi said. We are also in the business of salvaging the country's economy, a general mobilization and laying the groundwork for peace within Sudan and with its neighbors, he added. Al-Mahdi emphasized that the tasks ahead call for involvement of all of the Sudanese political forces within the framework of national accord.

Framework To Include Leftists

JN161246 Khartoum SUNA in English 1020 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, April, 16 (SUNA)—The consultations of forming the reconciliatory government have reached a complete understanding on all political issues with exception to some, Premier Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi said, without elaborating the points of disagreement.

Al-Mahdi told the daily AL-WATAN issued here today that he will seek broad national reconciliation in tackling the national questions and difficulties facing the country, adding that the Sudanese leftists will take part, within this framework, till achieving the goals of April 1985, popular uprising.

"On the top of these goals achieving peace and exerting efforts based on justice, to end the war in the south" Al-Mahdi elaborated.

The impetus behind forming a national government is the size of the problems facing the country, Al-Mahdi said adding that from this understanding the Islamic National Front will take part in the government.

Al-Mahdi said the policies of the new government will be based on reconciliation between the conflicted believes and points of views as it happened in Latin America, Tunisia, and Afghanistan.

The prime minister pointed out that the southern political parties have agreed on the reconciliation and described it as important in achieving peace and development.

He urged the other southern forces, in an apparent reference to Sudan People's Liberation Movement "SPLM", to join the reconciliation, adding that he is reconsidering the ways in which the Sudanese leftists will take part in the government.

Al-Mirghani Statement

EA161824 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Mr Ahmad al-Mirghani, the chairman of the State Council has issued the following statement:

[Begin recording] [passage indistinct] That his excellency the prime minister submitted his resignation to us and requested that the ministers be relieved [passage indistinct] and to the level of the incidents and challenges [passage indistinct], as soon as possible, so as to support their armed forces and put an end to the current war to arrive at a peaceful political and democratic solution through a national constitutional conference and to deal with the urgent welfare needs of the masses, such as services, peace, and development.

For all this the head of State Council has decided the following.

1. To relieve all the ministers of their constitutional responsibilities and posts.

2. To postpone the resignation of the prime minister until he informs his ministers of the decision to relieve them.

3. The prime minister will undertake in the meantime the running of government business with the help of leaders of the civil service until the decision on accepting his resignation is accepted.

4. The State Council urges all political forces to exert every effort to form a government of reconciliation and national orientation that will suit the tasks of this phase for achieving peace, overcoming the economic crisis, and raising standards of basic services, particularly easing the difficulties of life.

Attention by the Sudanese political movement to this issue is a matter of urgency and extreme importance and a maximum priority.

The State Council will in general (?undertake) its higher constitutional responsibility to entrench national unity and the spirit of national solidarity and national reconciliation so as to strengthen the democratic regime.

The State Council will ask the Constituent Assembly at the appropriate time to elect a prime minister when the resignation is accepted.

Success is but by God.

Subordinates Assume Duties

JN180954 Khartoum SUNA in English 0915 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, April 18 (SUNA)—Premier Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi yesterday entrusted the undersecretaries of the various ministries to take over the duties of the relieved ministers till the formation of the new government.

According to the decision, the undersecretaries were empowered to take all necessary decisions to run the government duties except those related to dismissal and exceptional promotion of government employees.

Al-Mahdi made the decision at the meeting held at the Council of Ministers Secretariat-General yesterday and was attended by Armed Forces commander-in-chief, police director general, undersecretaries and the directors of various government departments.

Goverment Denounces Al-Wazir Assassination

JN161502 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1425 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, 16 Apr (SUNA)—Sudan has vehemently denounced the assassination of the Arab Palestinian struggler martyr Khalil al-Wazir, also known as Abu Jihad, who was assassinated in Tunis last night.

A statement issued by the Foreign Ministry said Sudan can only express its denunciation of this ugly crime. Likewise, Sudan condemns the Israeli scheme to deport the Palestinian strugglers from their homeland. Eight of these strugglers have been deported to Lebanon after all the repressive and terrorist Israeli methods were exhausted. The statement added that Sudan, which has continued to follow with concern what is taking place in occupied Palestine in terms of terrorist methods

employed there, affirms that a people who have the determination of the Palestinian people will not collapse under repression and terrorism.

Juba Airport Missiles Fired by 'Mistake'

JN161541 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1455 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Khartoum, 16 Apr (SUNA)—The Armed Forces have completely denied any link between the rebel movement and the incident which resulted from two missiles falling on the Juba airport in the Southern Region recently.

An Armed Forces official spokesman said in a statement today that while a fighter at the Juba airport was undergoing routine maintenance while parked at the Juba airport, some missiles were launched from it by mistake. The missiles hit a water reservoir and inflicted damage on another plane, which was not in service, but no citizen was injured as a result of the incident. The statement added that the competent authorities have begun investigations into the incident and the necessary measures have been taken.

Regarding the report published in the newspaper AL-JADIDAH [name as received] here today that two missiles landed in the Juba airport, the official spokesman said reliance on nonofficial sources only serves the enemies and creates confusion and instability. He added: It is regrettable for some local papers to become a tool of enemy psychological warfare while seeking to realize a scoop. Concluding his statement, the spokesman stressed that there are no dangers posed to the city of Juba.

Tunisia

Committee To Investigate Al-Wazir Death

LD161548 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Following the martyrdom of Khalil al-Wazir, Abu Jihad, at dawn today, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali today at the Republican Palace in Carthage and in the presence of the interior minister, Habib Ammar, received Hakam Bal'awi, the PLO representative in Tunis. Bal'awi said that the head of state, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, has condemned the criminal act which was aimed at Abu Jihad at dawn today.

Hakam Bal'awi said: President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali asked me to convey his deep regret and sorrow to the martyr's family, to Brother Abu 'Ammar, to the Palestinian leadership, and to the sons of the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territories. He said that the president has reaffirmed Tunisia's, the president's, the govenment's, and the people's support for the Palestinian people in their struggle, under the leadership of the PLO, their sole legitimate representative, to achieve their national objectives and establish their independent state.

Hakam Bal'awi said: I conveyed to the president the appreciation of the Palestinian leadership, led by Yasir 'Arafat, and that of the Palestinian people for this position.

We have learned that President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali has decided to set up a committee to investigate the circumstances of Abu Jihad's assassination. He is following the progress of the committee's inquiries personally and closely. On the instruction of the president, Interior Minister Habib Ammar went at dawn today to the residence of martyr Abu Jihad in the suburb of Sidi Bousaid to inspect the place where the assassination took place and to offer his condolences.

Committee Begins Work

LD161814 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Preliminary inquires by the committee entrusted by His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to investigate the circumstances surrounding the assassination of the Palestinian struggler Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir]. They indicate that at 0130 a group consisting of seven persons, including a woman, armed with pistols and machineguns fitted with silencers attacked the residence of Abu Jihad in the Sidi Abu Sa'id suburb. The attackers fired a hail of bullets at the Palestinian official and his two Palestinian guards, Mustafa 'Ali 'Abd al-'Al, and Sulayman Abu Kadshan, and a Tunisian gardener named Al-Habib ibn Husayn al-Sakhir.

Abu Jihad confronted the group firing his personal pistol before he was hit in various parts of his body. Following this, the group headed for the Raoued forest in three cars—a Peugeot 305 and two VW-type minibuses, which were found abandoned this morning. It appears that false identities were used to rent these vehicles from car rental firms. The inquiry continues.

Bahrain

PLO's 'Arafat Leaves Manama for Riyadh 16 Apr

JN161010 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0955 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Manama, 16 Apr (WAKH)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat and the accompanying delegation left Manama for Riyadh at noon today after a 2-day visit to Bahrain within a tour of a number of regional states. 'Arafat was seen off upon departure by Shaykh Muhammad ibn Mubarak Al Khalifah, Bahraini foreign minister, and Wafa Yanhan, head of the PLO office in Bahrain.

'Arafat told WAKH that his meetings with his highness the Bahraini amir and his highness the Bahraini prime minister were fruitful and that the amir and his prime minister stressed Bahrain's firm support for the just Palestinian cause on all occasions, especialy the Palestinian people's uprising in the occupied territories.

'Arafat also said that during these meetings, they discussed Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid's call for convening an Arab summit conference in Algiers during the 1st week of June, adding that their highnesses showed their welcome of the conference and stressed the importance of this summit, which will be convened at a critical state of the Palestine question and the current Arab situation. He said he thanked the Bahraini amir and prime minister for the position of Bahrain—government and people—on the Palestine question as well as their support for the Palestinian people.

'Arafat also said he received the deep condolences of the Bahraini amir on the martyrdom of Khalil al-Wazir, also know as Abu Jihad, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, who was martyred at dawn today. He expressed his thanks to and appreciation for his highnesse's warm feelings toward martyr struggler Abu Jihad.

The Palestinian leader also said that during his meeting with the amir, views were exchanged on a number of pressing pan-Arab issues, including the importance of the joint Arab action to end the Iraq-Iran war and implement Security Council Resolution No 598 to end bloodshed.

In his statement, 'Arafat called for intensive Arab and Islamic efforts to end this destructive war, from which the enemies of the Arab and Islamic nations are benefiting. He urged the Iranian leaders to accept the peace initiatives to end the war.

Regarding the hijacking of the Kuwaiti plane, 'Arafat said this criminal action does not harm only the brothers in Kuwait, but also harms every honorable person in the Arab and Islamic nation, adding that such actions will have a negative effect on the uprising of our Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

Kuwait

Further Reportage on Hijacking of Airliner

Algerian Prime Minister Phoned

LD151320 Kuwait Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] His highness the heir apparent and prime minister, Shaykh Sa'd al-Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, telephoned his brother, the prime minister of sister Algeria, His Excellency Abdelhamid Brahimi, at noon today within the context of the contacts underway to intensify efforts to bring about the release of the passengers of the hijacked Kuwaiti plane.

Envoy to USSR on Hijacking

LD151757 Moscow TASS in English 1640 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] Moscow April 15 TASS—Kuwait resolutely condemns terrorism, the Kuwaiti ambassador to the Soviet Union, 'Abd al-Muhsin al-Du'ayj, has pointed out, commenting on the latest developments connected with the hijacking of a Kuwaiti airliner. In an interview with a correspondent of the newspaper TRUD, published today, he pointed out that such actions played into the hands of Israeli aggressors.

Shi'ite extremist parties, backed by the Khomeyni regime, were formed in southern Lebanon following the June 1982 invasion of Israeli troops. These groups carried out terrorist actions against Soviet representatives, American and French embassies in several countries.

Kuwaiti security forces arrested some of these terrorists. In February 1984, 17 people received various prison terms, three were sentenced to death, although the sentences were not carried out. None of the criminals were Kuwaiti nationals. They were convicted not for an attempted coup d'etat, but for criminal actions against foreign states carried out in Kuwaiti territory.

Al-Du'ayj said that the hijackers carried forged passports: Four Bahrain, one Colombian and two Iraqi ones. The ambassador highly assessed the mediatory role of the Palestine Liberation Organisation in talks with the hijackers.

Amir Telephones Bendjedid

LD161914 Kuwait KUNA in English 1727 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, April 16 (KUNA)—H.H. the Amir tonight reached Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid over the telephone over the hijack of the Kuwaiti airliner currently grounded at the Houari Boumedienne Airport in Algiers.

Block of Departure Asked

LD162130 Kuwait KUNA in English 2116 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, April 17 (KUNA)—Kuwait Saturday night requested the Algerian Government to block the departure of the hijacked Kuwaiti airliner from Algerian territory and stressed the need to safeguard the lives of the plane's passengers. The Kuwaiti request was made by H.H. the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'id al-'Abdallah al-Sabah when he received a telephone call from the Algerian premier, Abdelhamid Brahimi.

The Kuwait premier expressed a wish that the Algerian Government would take all measures to safeguard the lives of the innocent passengers held hostage, as Kuwait viewed them the sons and guests of Algeria, a statement issued by the office of the crown prince said.

Modarresi Denies Connection

JN171044 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 15 Apr 88 p 1

[Text] Mohammad Taqiyoddin Modarresi has denied any connection with the hijacking of the Kuwaiti airliner "Al-Jabiriyah" and condemned all actions that harm and endanger the lives of innocent people. Modarresi's office, in an unidentified place, sent a statement by facsimile to the AL-QABAS office in London. The statement says:

The office of the scholar Mohammad Taqiyoddin Modarresi announces that the report published in your paper is totally untrue and is a mere allegation not corroborated by any evidence. The scholar Modarresi declares that in line with our Islamic principles we do not approve actions that harm and endanger the lives of innocent people. What was published in the paper is based on incorrect information. Kindly publish the truth. Thank you.

'Evidence' Against Iran Noted

LD171045 Kuwait KUNA in English 1007 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] London, April 17 (KUNA)—Two leading British newspapers confirmed Sunday that the evidence that has emerged after the hijacking of the Kuwaiti plane was overwhelming in pointing the finger of guilt "in an unequivocal way at Iran." Both THE SUNDAY TIMES and THE OBSERVER newspapers indicated that Iran was involved in the hijacking which ranks as the most sophisticated and sinister in its preparation and execution.

THE SUNDAY TIMES pointed out that as the Kuwaiti jet continued to be stranded at Algiers airport with 31 hostages still on board, "one inescapable conclusion has been drawn by negotiators, politicians, security experts and the released hostages: Whoever is pulling the strings, they are not on board the aircraft."

Quoting former hostages, the paper said that the number of hijackers "definitely increased" after the plane landed at Mashhad Airport in Iran. In addition, more weapons including machineguns, larger pistols and different grenades were provided while the aircraft was on Iranian soil.

An Egyptian travel officer, Sherif Badrawi who was severely beaten when stretching his cramped legs into the aisle of the jet said "at Mashhad a box of grenades appeared. I could see it in the aisle beside one of the galleys." In the meantime, other former hostages interviewed by THE SUNDAY TIMES stressed that "Mashhad was more than a destination. It was a rendezvous."

The paper also believed that the sudden release of all Western hostages negotiated by Iranian officials served only to fuel suspicions against Tehran. For its part, THE OBSERVER warned that Iranian involvement in the air piracy raises the prospect of further and even more horrible government-inspired hijacks in the future. The weekly made it clear that the Iranians should not have allowed the aircraft to leave Mashhad.

In another article, THE SUNDAY TIMES paid tribute to Kuwaiti firm line against blackmail by saying that this Arab nation has "earned respect of the West in its steadfast refusal to bow to the demands of the hijackers." While France, West Germany and even the US have tried to deal with terrorists, Kuwait stands firm, it added.

A third newspaper, THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH, published what it calls an exclusive picture of the man behind the hijack, Imad Mughaniyah. The publication maintained that he heads the CIA's list of wanted men and he is also "credited with masterminding the kidnap of many Western hostages" in Lebanon. The paper pinpointed that "there is little doubt Mughaniyah has close ties with factions within the Iranian Government".

In a related development, the British media largely continued today to highlight the 13-day ordeal of the Kuwaiti jet and to condemn the air pirates, while calling for international solidarity against all acts of terrorism.

Amir Phones Jordan's Husayn, Egypt's Mubarak

LD171033 Kuwait Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] His highness the amir had this morning telephoned two of his brothers: His Majesty King Husayn ibn Talal, the monarch of the fraternl Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the sisterly Arab Republic of Egypt.

Amir Phones Al-Asad

LD181042 Kuwait Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] His highness the amir last night had a telephone contact with his brother President Hafiz al-Asad, president of the fraternal Syrian Arab Republic.

Iranian Claims About Bubiyan Island Denied

LD181055 Kuwait Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] An authoritative Foreign Ministry source announced the following:

Kuwait follows with much regret what the Iranian information organs repeat regarding an alleged use of the Kuwaiti Bubiyan Island in military operations against the Iranian troops which are occupying the Iraqi Al-Faw Peninsula. Kuwait, through various means, has repeatedly categorically denied that it has allowed or is allowing any one to use any inch of its territories in any way in this tragic war.

Kuwait reiterates its categorical denial of what the Iranian information organs have broadcast. This denial has already been conveyed officially to the Iranian Government through the usual diplomatic channels. A meeting was held at 0200 today between the undersecretary of the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry and the Iranian charge d'affaires. Kuwait hopes these Iranian information organs will stop making such false claims; repeating such groundless excuses suggest premeditated intentions to resume aggression against Kuwait.

Kuwait has informed the concerned international bodies about these groundless claims and about Iran's serious threats against Kuwait.

Cabinet Discusses Al-Wazir Death, Hijacking

LD161550 Kuwait KUNA in English 1401 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Kuwait, April 16 (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti Cabinet Saturday condemned the assassination of deputy general commander of the Palestinian revolutionary forces, Khalil al-Wazir in Tunis last night.

The Council of Ministers also hoped for a near end to the tragic incident of the hijacked Kuwaiti airplane, Al-Jabiriyah, currently grounded in Houari Boumedienne Airport in Algeria.

Following the cabinet regular meeting, which was presided by H.H. the Crown Prince and Premier Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah, State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Rashid 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Rashid stated that the cabinet members strongly denounced the cowardly killing of Al-Wazir and particularly that it came at a time when the Palestinian uprising in occupied Arab lands is scoring daily victories.

The cabinet expressed confidence that this incident will make the Palestinian people more determined to continue their revolt against the occupation until their legitimate rights of establishing an independent state on their soil and under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization are restored, Al-Rashid said.

He also said that the cabinet followed the developments of the hijacked Kuwaiti plane and contacts made by Algerian officials in a bid to seek the release of the hostages.

The Council of Ministers reviewed the popular reaction to this tragic event praising the Kwuaiti people's unified stance in confronting challenges and crises that [words indistinct] security and stability.

The cabinet members expressed deep appreciation of the Kuwaiti people's support to the government in rejecting all kinds of blackmail and intimidation, Al-Rashid said.

He also noted that the government thanked Arab countries' brotherly stances and efforts toward the hijacking operation, pointing to efforts exerted by the PLO and the kind stances of all brothers in Lebanon in a bid to reach peaceful end to the ordeal.

Al-Rashid said that the cabinet affirmed that efforts will continue to find a peaceful solution to the hijacking ordeal and secure the safety of all those innocent people, who are held hostages on board the plane while maintaining Kuwait's firm principles.

The Kuwaiti cabinet ministers were also briefed on the message which was received by h.h. the amir from the president of Maldives on bilateral ties, the Kuwaiti state minister said.

He added that they were also briefed on the contents of the message sent by h.h. the crown prince and prime minister to President of the United States Ronald Reagan in reply to the latter's message which had carried an invitation to Shaykh Sa'd to visit the U.S. for talks on issues of mutual interest and bilateral relations.

The cabinet members, Al-Rashid went on, discussed major political events particularly developments at the Arab and international levels.

The minister reviewed resolutions and recommendations presented by ministerial committees in addition to discussing local issues, Al-Rashid concluded.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Receives PLO's 'Arafat in Riyadh

LD161401 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1344 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Riyadh, 16 Apr (SPA)—The custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, may God safeguard him, received in his office at Al-Yamamah

Palace this afternoon Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, and the delegation accompanying him. The meeting was attended by His Royal Highness Amir Salman ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, amir of the Riyadh region; his excellency the minister of information, 'Ali al-Sha'ir, and the PLO representative in the Kingdom, Rafiq Shakir al-Natshah.

'Arafat is accompanied by Salah Khalaf, member of Fatah Cental Committee, and Hani al-Hasan, member of Fatah Central Committee and 'Arafat's political adviser.

The chairman of the PLO Executive Committee arrived in Riyadh earlier today. He was welcomed at the airport by His Royal Highness Amir Salman ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz and by the PLO representative to the Kingdom.

Fahd Contacts Leaders of Algeria, Libya, Kuwait

LD171832 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1807 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Riyadh, 17 Apr (SPA)—Within the framework of continuous consultations between the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Sa'ud, and his brothers the leaders of the Arab countries, there were telephone contacts today. These were between the custodian of the two holy mosques and His Excellency Chadli Bendjedid, president of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, His Excellency Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, president of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, and his highness the amir of Kuwait, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah.

Royal Court Statement on Pilgrimage Released

LD161617 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1418 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Riyadh, 16 Apr (SPA)—A statement was released by the Royal Court today calling on citizens and residents who have previously performed pilgrimage rites to give the opportunity to their brother pilgrims coming from abroad to perform pilgrimage so they could perform their pilgrimage in ease. Following is the text of the statement:

A statement from the Royal Court: The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would like to announce to all citizens and nationals of sisterly Islamic countries resident in the Kingdom that from the beginning of 1408 it will, as it is known, execute projects to extend the area surrounding the two holy places in Mecca and Al-Madinah.

These projects include the demolition of a large number of small and old residential houses surrounding the two holy places and the building of huge modern buildings in their place. This is with a view to take in the largest possible number of pilgrims and visitors coming to God's house and the noble messenger's moscque.

In view of the fact that work on these projects over approximately 3 years will affect the capacity of the two holy cities of Mecca and Al-Madinah to receive all the pilgrims and the sons of the Islamic nation coming from abroad, and out of a desire to give the opportunity to all those from among our brother citizens, residents, and the sons of the Islamic nation coming from abroad who have not performed the pilgrimage rites previously, and in implementation of the resolutions of the 17th conference of the foreign ministers of ICO member-states on regulating the percentage of pilgrims coming from each Islamic country according to their population, the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would like, proceeding from these facts, to stress to all brothers, citizens, and residents alike who have already performed this religious duty to make room for their brothers who are coming for the hajj, so the latter may perform their hajj easily and peacefully, especially since such a religious duty, which is the fifth pillar of Islamic religious duties, is ordered by God to be performed by Muslims, male and female, only once in a lifetime. It is also known that God's prophet, may God's peace and benedictions be upon him, performed the hajj duties only once in his lifetime, which was called the valedictory hajj. We should follow our noble prophet's good example.

The custodian of the two holy mosques would like finally to express his thanks and appreciations to leaders of the Islamic countries who expressed their brotherly feelings and reduced the number of their countries' pilgrims for the reasons and the period mentioned above.

We pray to Almighty God to make us all like those who, in hearing advice, will follow the best of it. May God guide us to what he would like for us and accept from us. He is the best listener.

United Arab Emirates

Iranian Boats Attack Platform, British Tanker

JN181015 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1000 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Following the U.S. attack today on two Iranian oil platforms in the Gulf, an Iranian boat attacked an oil platform belonging to the Emirate of Sharjah and used by the United States. The report was carried by REUTER which cited Gulf shipping sources. The results of the Iranian boat attack on the platform are not yet known.

We have just heard that a British oil tanker was attacked today by Iranian boats. The attack was announced in London by Lloyds Marine Insurance Company.

Reportage on Gulf War Combat Activities

Communique No 3,137

JN151739 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,137 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 15 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Last night and today, our heroic aircraft carried out the following strikes against enemy cities:

1. At 2100 [1700 GMT] yesterday our aircraft raided Hamadan.

2. At 2230 yesterday our aircraft mounted a raid against Kermanshah [Bakhtaran].

3. At 0800 today our aircraft struck Dezful.

4. At 0900 today our aircraft struck Borujerd.

5. At 1107 today our aircraft raided Reza'iyeh.

6. At 1111 today our aircraft raided Bukan.

7. At the same time other aircraft were striking Shahin Dizah.

8. At 1210 today our aircraft raided Miandoab.

9. At 1506 today our aircraft struck Dezful a second time.

10. At 1508 today our aircraft struck Hamadan, the second strike in the last 24 hours. Having completed their mission, our eagles returned safely to base with God's care. Blessed be our Air Force men.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 15 April 1988

Communique No 3,138

JN151746 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1700 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,138 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 15 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Last night and today, our units carried out the following activities:

1. Our aircraft carried out 93 combat sorties in the operations sectors as pointed out in our Communique No 3,137 of this afternoon. Having accomplished their missions, our aircraft returned safely to base.

2. The courageous pilots of the helicopter gunships today mounted 68 combat missions, inflicting fresh losses on enemy personnel, weaponry, and equipment. All of them returned safely to base, thanks be to God.

3. Ten assorted vehicles were burned or destroyed, one bulldozer was destroyed, one shovel [preceding word in English] was damaged, two ammunition dumps were blown up, and one observation post was destroyed and its crew killed in the II Army Corps central sector.

4. An infantry position was destroyed and an ammunition dump was blown up in the III Army Corps sector east of Basra. Three scoundrels were killed and an infantry position and two observation posts were destroyed in the IV Army Corps sector east of Maysan.

5. An infantry position and a machinegun position were destroyed in the VI Army Corps sector east of the Tigris. In the VII Army Corps sector, three machineguns, three mortars, and an observation post were destroyed.

6. The criminal enemy today shelled with long-range artillery residential districts in Basra, Khanaqin, Qal'at Dizah, Badrah, and 'Ali al-Gharbi. The enemy shelling martyred or wounded a number of civilians, including women and children, and damaged a number of houses and an elementary school building. Mercy and forgiveness to our martyrs. Swift recovery to our wounded, God willing.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 15 April 1988

Communique No 3,139

JN161629 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1600 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,139 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 16 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. With God's help and the determination of the zealous men of the military industries and the Al-Husayn Missile Force, the following blows with Al-Husayn missiles were dealt to the enemy cities:

1. At 0005 [2005 GMT on 15 April] last night, the Al-Husayn Missile Force carried out its 95th strike against the city of Esfahan.

2. At 0340 today, the Al-Husayn Missile Force launched its 96th strike at the citys of Esfahan.

3. At 0442 today, the Al-Husayn Missile Force carried out its 97th strike at the city of Qom.

4. At 0829 today, the 98th missile strike was launched at the city of Tehran.

5. At 0855 today, the Al-Husayn Missile Force launched its 99th strike against the city of Tehran.

6. At 1000 today, the Al-Husayn Missile Force launched a strike against the city of Tehran. It is the 100th strike since the Iranian regime resumed its shelling of our secure cities, violating the bases that we have announced to halt the shelling of cities. It is also the 168th strike against the enemy's cities since the Iranian regime ignited the cities war on 28-29 February 1988.

Blessed be the men of the military industries and the Al-Husayn Missile Force. Let us go ahead.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 16 April 1988

Communique No 3,140

JN161701 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1605 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,140 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 16 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our units' activities for last night and today were as follows:

1. The planes of our Air Force flew 95 combat missions today, inflicting losses on the enemy and achieving the following:

a. At 1842 [1442 GMT] yesterday, our planes dealt a blow to the ciy of Hamadan.

b. At 1846 yesterday, our planes dealt a blow to the city of Dezful.

c. At 0800 today, our planes dealt a blow to the city of Hamadan.

d. At the same time, other planes raided the city of Dezful.

Having accomplished their duties, all our planes returned safely to base, in God's care.

2. Our brave helicopter gunships flew 116 combat missions today, inflicting more losses on the enemies of our country. Then they returned safely to base, God be praised.

3. Our units in the northern sector of the operational theaters achieved the following: killing 28 scoundrels; wounding others; destroying 1 81-mm mortar gun, 2 single- barreled machineguns, and 3 infantry positions; and blowing up 2 ammunition dumps.

4. Ten enemy personnel were killed and four infantry positions, two gun emplacements, and one machinegun were destroyed and their occupants were killed in the II Army Corps central sector.

5. Three light machineguns and two firing positions were destroyed and three scoundrels were killed in the VII Army Corps front.

6. At 1450 today, the criminal Iranian regime fired one of its missiles at the city of Baghdad. It landed in a residential area and martyred or wounded a number of houses, shops, and cars. Three enemy planes also crossed our international borders this morning and attacked residential areas in the cities of Irbil, Dahuk, and Dukan. The criminal enemy also shelled residential areas in the cities of Basra, Al-Sulaymaniyah, Khanaqin, 'Ali al-Gharbi, and Al-Zubayr with long-range artillery. The shelling martyred or wounded a number of citizens, including women and children. Paradise to our martyrs and swift recovery to our wounded, God willing.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 16 April 1988

Defense Minister Visits Front

JN161856 Baghdad INA in English 1825 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Baghdad, April 16, INA—Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Iraqi Armed Forces and Minister of Defence Gen. 'Adnan Khayrallah visited the sector of the 1st Iraqi Army Corps (northern sector).

During the visit, Gen. Khayrallah conferred with military commanders and praised the heroic and epic fighting of Iraqi combatants in repelling the Iranian aggression, stressing that Iraqi combatants would remain on a high state of vigilance and alert in defending Iraq and defeating any reckless attempt by the desperate Iranian regime.

He also praised the high combat capability of the Iraqi Armed Forces which broke off the enemy's backbone.

Gen. Khayrallah was briefed by the commanders on the arrangement taken to strengthen Iraqi forward positions and gave his instructions, stressing that the enemy would pay dearly for its insistence on aggression and expansion.

Communique No 3,141

JN171130 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1046 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,141 issued by the Azrmed Forces General Command on 17 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Great Iraqi people, men of our valiant Armed Forces, and sons of our glorious nation: You all know—and equitable men in the world also know—that since

the beginning of the war, and even before the Iranian aggression against our country and people, we had worked and continue to work for the attainment of a just and honorable peace to prevent bloodshed. However, the Iranian rulers who have a natural propensity for evil and who are incited by all the factors of baseness, treachery, and the spirit of destruction have chosen the war path and have insisted on proceeding along it in spite of all the efforts by international and regional quarters and in spite of the generous call to end the war which our leadership and people have been making on every occasion.

Instead of explicitly and unconditionally accepting UN Security Council Resolution 598, the Iranian regime began to maneuver around it to commit another new aggression against our border cities and villages in the Halabjah sector. The Iranian regime believed that entering our territory in this sector, thanks to the collaboration of agents who have sold their souls to the foreigner, will open the door to its evil and frustrated actions.

Instead of agreeing to the UN Security Council resolution and ending the war in an honorable manner, it exploited the hesitation and maneuvers of some quarters as a cover for its aggression in that sector. The Iraqis frustrated its dreams, buried its hopes, and slaughtered many of its men on the road of evil that it has chosen without allowing them to achieve their objective. The Iranian regime adopted the practice of making claims that cannot stand in the face of the realities of military geography, the nature of the protracted war, or the steadfastness of the righteous Iraqis.

Despite all this, the valiant fighters of the Armed Forces were yearning to strike the invaders and cut off the hollow heads that committed aggression against our good land, the land of heroism, the pious, and the good in Al-Faw.

Thus, O glorious Iraqis, while your sons in the northern sector of operations fought a successful defensive battle by the standard of a protracted war and its objectives, destroyed the waves of invaders there, absorbed the momentum of their thrust, and destroyed, together with the invaders, the agents who acquiesced to disgrace and humiliation, your lion sons in the Al-Faw sector advanced forward to liberate the land and trample with their feet those who dared to attack great Iraq. In their forefront are faithful men of the heroic VII Army Corps and men of the difficult missions from the Presidential Guards, with the banners of great Iraq flying above them, and with Almighty God caring for them, in the "Blessed Ramadan" operations, chanting the voice of truth, God is great. Every grain of soil of the forward sand barriers in the sector echoed their cry.

Until it is time to broadcast more details we ask Almighty God to protect our sons, men of the Armed Forces, against all harm and to give them strength and glory and to crown their efforts with a clear victory. God is all-hearing, all-responding. God is great. Disgrace to the vanquished.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 17 April 1988.

'Fierce Fighting' in Al-Faw

JN171530 Baghdad INA in English 1451 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Baghdad, April 17 INA—An IRAQI NEWS AGENCY field correspondent reported this afternoon that fierce fighting is taking place in the Al-Faw sector where the Iraqi Armed Forces are making a concentrated and impeteous push to liberate land from the Iranian invaders. The correspondent accompanying Iraqi combat units said he saw the corpses of thousands of enemy troops littering the battlefield while large numbers of enemy soldiers captured by victorious Iraqi Armed Forces are being evacuated to the rear.

The General Command of the Iraqi Armed Forces announced earlier today that epic fighting is taking place in the Al-Faw peninsula where the Iraqi Armed Forces have launched a major offensive to liberate Iraqi territory from Iranian invading forces.

Communique No 3,142

JN171523 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1444 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,142 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 17 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Subsequent to our Communique No 3,141 issued at noon today, the Presidential Guard units stormed enemy defenses on the Salty Lake [Al-Mamlahah] and destroyed its defense lines after completely destroying its forces. Only those who fled or were captured survived. Thus, the entire salt lake and the sea coast parallel to it have been liberated. The Presidential Guard units dashed toward their other targets according to the set plan. At the same time, at 0630 [0230 GMT] today, the VII Army Corps forces and the forces affiliated with them stormed enemy concentrations between the western bank of Shatt al-'Arab, which falls within the framework of responsibility of the Presidential Guard uits. The VII Corps achieved the vital objectives assigned to it.

Thus far, thousands of enemy forces have been killed or wounded and large numbers of them also fell in captivity. Our heroic forces are continuing their resolute advance while the enemy is retreating in disarray along the entire front. The most prominent positive results of the this battle, which is part of a series of the blessed Ramadan operations, are the full cooperation and coordination of even the smallest details among the Presidential Guard units and the VII Army Corps; the land, air, and naval units; and the various corps of the Armed Forces.

The VII Army Corps forces' operations were led by Staff Lieutenant General Mahir 'Abd al-Rahid, while the Presidential Guard units were led by Staff Major General Iyad Futayyih al-Rawi. Our success in all this has come from Almighty God. Praise be to God. mercy to our righteous martyrs. God is great. Accursed be the lowly.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 17 April 1988

Communique No 3,143

JN171534 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1513 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,143 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 17 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. With God's help and the determiantion of the men of the military industries and the Al-Husayn Missile Force, the following missile strikes were carried out:

1. At 1130 [0730 GMT] today, the 101st strike carried out with the Al-Husayn missiles against Tehran, the capital of the charlatans.

2. At the same time, the 102d strike with the Al-Husayn missiles was carried out against the city of Tehran.

3. At the same time, the 103rd strike with the Al-Husayn missiles was carried out also against the city of Tehran.

4. At the same time, the 104th strike with the Al-Husayn missiles was carried out against the city of Tehran.

5. At the same time, the 105th strike with the Al-Husayn missiles was also carried out against the city of Tehran.

6. At the same time, the Al-Husayn Missile Force carried out its 106th strike against the city of Tehran.

7. At 1415 today, the 107th strike was carried out at the city of Shiraz. Blessed be our zealous men, and praised be to God for His victory.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 17 April 1988

Communique No 3,144

JN171638 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1610 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,144 issued by the armed Forces General Command on 17 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The following is the overall activities of our Armed Forces for last night and today:

1. The planes of our heroic Air Forces flew 137 combat missions to extend effective support and participate with our brave forces in liberating the homeland. All of our planes returned safely to base, in God's care.

2. The brave knights of the helicopter gunships participated in extending effective support for our victorious forces by flying 181 combat missions. Then the knights returned safely to their bases. God be praised.

3. It has been affirmed to us that one of the planes, which crossed our border yesterday morning to attack residential areas in the city of Dukan, was shot down by our field defenses.

4. Four scoundrels were killed, one 107-mm tubular launcher and one vehicle were destroyed, and one ammunition dump was blown up in the I Army Corps northern sector and three assorted positions and one single-barrelled machinegun were destroyed and two ammunition dumps were blown up in the II Army Corps central sector.

5. Three enemy personnel were killed and two infantry positions were destroyed in the IV Army Corps sector east of Maysan and five assorted positions, one 81-mm mortar gun, and one medium machinegun were destroyed in the VI Army Corps sector east of the Tigris.

6. Expressing its failure and defeat, the criminal Iranian enemy shelled residential areas in the cities of Basra, Al-Sulaymaniyah, Badrah, Qal'at Dizah, 'Ali al-Gharbi, Qazaniyah, and Khanaqin with long-range artillery last night and today. The shelling martyred or wounded a number of civilians, including women and children, and caused damage to a number of houses, shops, and an elementary school. Paradise to our martyrs and swift recovery to our wounded, God willing.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 17 April 1988

Spokesman Denies Boats Sunk

JN171814 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1752 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Apr (INA)—A military spokesman has denied Iranian allegations that three Iraqi boats and one ship were sunk in Khawr 'Abdallah today. In a statement to INA, the spokesman said that we used to hear such lies from the Iranian media and that such lies will not deceive anybody because they have nothing to do with facts.

The spokesman added that the Iranian rulers resort to such lies to alleviate the impact of their defeat before the Iraqi Armed Forces and distract their people's attention from the losses inflicted on them by the Iraqi strikes.

Missile Strike on Qom

JN180456 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 2210 GMT 17 Apr

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 17 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. With God's help, the 108th missile strike was launched at the city of Qom at 0135 [2125 GMT on 17 April]. Blessed be our brave men. Praise be to God for His victory.

[Dated] 17 April 1988

18 Apr Strike on Qom

JN180457 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 0426 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 18 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. With God's help, the Al-Husayn Missile Force launched the 109th strike at the city of Qom at 0352 today [2352 GMT on 17 April]. May God salute the sons of great Iraq. Praise be to God always.

[Dated] 18 April 1988

Missile Launched on Tehran

JN180508 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 0501 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 18 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. With God's help, the 110th strike with the Al-Husayn missiles was launched at the city of Tehran at 0815 [0415 GMT] today. God bless you O lofty men. Success comes from God.

[Dated] 18 April 1988

Missile Fired at Esfahan

JN180647 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 0641 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 18 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. At 0959 [0559 GMT] today, the Al-Husayn Missile Force launched the 111th strike with the Al-Husayn missiles at the city of Esfahan. Blessed be your efforts O heroes. Go ahead.

[Dated] 18 April

Communique No 3,145

JN180755 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0730 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,145 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 18 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. O great Iraqis, O sons of our brave Armed Forces: Our units in the sectors of the Presidential Guard Forces and the VII Army Corps are still advancing to accomplish their duties and objectives in accordance with the prepared plan. The Presidential Guards have accomplished the objectives of the first and second phases of the Blessed Ramadan operations. The Presidential Guard Forces are continuing their advance to accomplish the objectives of the third and last phase. The VII Army Corps has accomplished important objectives on the path of the objectives of the first and second phases. The Corps units are still advancing on the path of their planned objectives. Our units' morale is on the rise and the enemy's morale is very low.

Our valiant Armed Forces have totally destroyed all enemy forces in the Al-Faw triangle. What remains are small groups and individuals scattered at random who have lost contact with some of their remaining headquarters in the operations threater now that their front and rear headquarters have been destroyed and their commanders have been killed or wounded. These small groups have only three options: death, imminent defeat, or captivity.

Victory is from God. God is great. Disgrace to the vanquished.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 18 April 1988

Missile Lands in Baghdad

JN181330 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1320 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 18 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. At 1620 [1220 GMT] today, the criminal Iranian rulers fired a missile at the city of Baghdad. The missile fell on a residential area, martyring and wounding a number of civilians, including women, old people, and children. It also demolished and damaged several houses, shops, and cars. Paradise to our martyrs and speedy recovery to our wounded, God willing.

[Dated] 18 April 1988

Communique No 3,146

JN181415 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1353 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,146 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 18 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. O great Iraqi people, O sons of our glorious Arab nation, O valiant men in the brave Armed Forces: Subsequent to the Armed Forces General Command Communique No 3,141 on 17 April 1988 and Communique No. 3,145 issued this morning, 18 April 1988, the VII Army Corps accomplished all the objectives of the first and second phases in accordance with both the plan and the assigned tasks at 1400 [1000 GMT] today. The Presidential Guard force, men of difficult tasks, are continuing their brave fighting and the quick, firm advance to accomplish the objectives of the third and last phase of the series of the blessed Ramadan operations, which the Presidential Guard Force alone was entrusted to accomplish.

All military activities in the battlefield confirm that the morale of our Armed Forces men is increasing and that the enemy morale, reactions, and measures are bad. Victory is only from Almighty God. God is great. Accursed be the lowly ones.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 18 April 1988

Missile Fired at Tehran

JN181548 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1535 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Apr (INA)—The Iraqis fired one Al-Husayn missile at the Iranian capital, Tehran, at 1850 [1450 GMT] today. An Iraqi military spokesman has said this is the 112th missile strike.

Communique No 3,147

JN181546 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1455 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Communique No 3,147 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 18 April]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. O great Iraqi people, O sons of our glorious Arab nation, O valiant men in our brave Armed Forces: Today is a glorious day, the first day of the blessed month of Ramadan. It is your day, the day of Iraqis, the day of Arabs. On this day, Almighty God blessed the Armed Forces' struggle and championed the right over the falsehood. It is one of the distinguished days of right. It is one of the banners of glory flying over your heads while God is blessing your efforts, patience and sacrifices.

O faithful Iraqis, Almighty God has supported you and your sons have entered the beloved city of Al-Faw with lofty heads after He had protected them against any mishap, thus liberating its soil from the filth of the covetous invaders and trampling with their feet every trace of the invaders who were thrown outside our chaste land by the shouts and the fire of the liberators. The invaders were thrown cursing their hard luck and licking their wounds on the eastern bank of Shatt Al-'Arab, thus getting away from the confrontation line with the Iraqis and their wrath. Woe to them from God's torture and from the wrath of the tolerant one when he becomes angry. Let us utter together: God is great. God is great. God is great. Praise be to God for His decisive victory.

On this blessed day, after performing part of our duties and thanking God for this victory, it is our duty to emphasize several facts and issues. Prominent among these facts is the saying that the protracted war has its own law, and that its results, including military gains on the ground, do not acquire the state of absolute permanence unless they are linked to facts that are far more important. Another fact is the latitude of legitimate behavior within the framework of sovereign rights of the parties and the legitimacy of their stand on this or that human law of this epoch.

On the basis of this understanding and belief, we have warned the Iranian rulers from the beginning that the dreams of expansion at the expense of Iraq and the Arab nation and imperial illusions are outmoded. With God's assistance, the Iraqis' will be capable of foiling their evil designs and dreams. The Iranian rulers turned a deaf ear and after that their conscience became numbed and devoid of any good feelings. They harbored bigger designs and became more arrogant and intransigent when they occupied Al-Faw following the February and March 1986 battles which took place in accordance with facilities and intelligence operations and counselling.

We know and others also know which parties had assisted them and how they did so. We told them at the time: Do not be deceived by this result which has nothing to do with the overall course of the conflict and do not give it more importance than it deserves. We also told them: Do not forget that the occupation of Al-Faw does not mean the occupation of Iraq, and that Baghdad, Irbil, Al-Najaf, and other Iraqi cities are hundreds of kilometers from Al-Faw. What is more important than all the geographic facts and transient results in the battle is that Iraq's determination is more than firm enough. What is also more important is that the Iraqi's faith in their rights, and their readiness to sacrifice to safeguard them are far greater than you believe. The Iraqis also believe that God will make them triumph over you because they defend justice while the devil is humiliating you and forces you to become his servants and not those of God.

We also told them that we are capable of liberating Al-Faw, any border city and village, and any inch of Iraqi territory they may occupy. They did not abide by justice

and rights. God has blinded them after they strayed from the sound course. They depended on a series of transient results of the conflict, particularly on the results they obtained in Al-Faw. We told them that we cannot predict all the bitter facts they will face after we emptied their pockets with the liberation of Al-Faw.

However, and in all cases, we will not forget the facts we have just mentioned and will not be seduced by the devil as they were seduced. We will not be obsessed by the self-conceit which afflicted them and settled in their minds. We will continue to thank God for His support.

As an expression of all this, we stress that there is no way to a sound life except peace and that the recognition of this fact dictates the recognition of the fact that both Iraq and Iran—people and regime—have the right to free choice. Both have the right to sovereignty over their land, water, and air space in accordance with international law and the UN Charter. They have the right to live and settle in the region without any disturbance or encroachment on these principles by any invader or occupier. Abstention from interference in others' internal affairs as a gesture of goodwill should be emphasized in words and deeds in order to serve the stability of the region's states, headed by the Arabian Gulf states.

We in Iraq profoundly believe in all this. We will not be pushed away from it by a victory we score over the invaders here or there or by an invasion and occupation of territories by invaders here or there. Therefore, there is no road other than this road and other than respect of the international will and international community. These include the acceptance of UN Security Council Resolution No 598 in an explicit and clear manner without prevarication and without conditions and according to the resolution's operative paragraphs. O God, I have conveyed the message. O God, be my witness.

Congratulations on the victory of the Iraqis, congratulations on the victory of the Arabs, congratulations on the victory of the Armed Forces. God is great. Accursed be the lowly.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 18 April 1988

Al-Faw Liberation Celebrated

JN181643 Baghdad INA in English 1625 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Baghdad, April 18, INA—Joy has swept Iraq from its remote north to its remote south following the announcement by the Iraqi General Command of the Iraqi Armed Forces of the liberation of Al-Faw. People throughout Iraq took to the streets in rejoice and thanking God for the liberation of Iraq territory following a malicious Iranian occupation that continued for more than two years. Gun salvo thundered skies Baghdad [as received] and all Iraqi cities in tribute of the great victory.

No Official Reaction to Abu Jihad Murder

TA161820 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Israel is not reacting to the murder of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir]. Avi Pazner, the prime minister's media adviser, and Foreign Ministry officials today answered dozens of appeals by the international media saying they know nothing about who is responsible for the act in Tunis. Our political correspondent Yig'al Goren reports that senior political sources in Jerusalem this evening assess that in the short term the murder will cause the PLO's position to become more extreme and will have a negative effect on the situation in the territories. In the long run, however, the assassination of Abu Jihad may moderate the extreme position he had embraced, which was against any political solution of the Middle East conflict.

Peres Declines Comment

TA171630 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1605 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] The real question is how the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation will be handled, with swords or through a dialogue. That was stated by Shim'on Peres, vice prime minister and foreign minister, who expressed the hope that the latest events, including the liquidation of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir], will not lead to a stalemate in the peace process in the region.

[Begin recording] [Peres] I hope it will not. After all, we must uproot violence as a political factor or as an element that can block political developments. Those who espouse violence will ultimately have to acknowledge the limits of violence. They will see that it can lead nowhere.

[Moti Amir] Are you saying that the killing of Abu Jihad was a signal?

[Peres] I would not like to refer to the Abu Jihad issue in any way. I am referring to the peace process. The fact that there is a conflict between us and the Palestinians is no secret. The real problem is how to deal with this conflict, with swords or in talks. This is the question.

[Amir] How do you think we can really reach a dialogue with the Palestinians without talking to the PLO?

[Peres] Right now, a lot depends on us. I do not believe that in the foreseeable future it will be possible to reach a dialogue without an international opening. Those who are not prepared to open the door will cause the door to remain locked. There is no chance of altering this fact, especially in light of the fact that the Arabs have pledged to launch direct negotiations immediately thereafter. We could, I believe, already have been deep in the negotiating stage and could thereby possibly have forestalled many of the difficulties we currently face. [end recording]

Envoy to France Blames PLO

LD160941 Paris Domestic Service in French 0900 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] There is no doubt in the PLO's view that Abu Jihad's [Khalil al-Wazir] murder is the work of the Israeli secret service: the PLO Paris representative Ibrahim al-Sus points to this as additional proof of the terrorist and racist nature of Israeli policy. Israeli Ambassador to France 'Ovadia Sofer, however, claims it is a PLO faction that is responsible for the attack because, he says, the very nature of this organization is that of internecine killing.

Parties Avoid Comment

TA171042 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1000 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] There has been virtually no reaction from Israel's political parties to the killing of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir]. Only the far right and far left were prepared to go on the record, as we hear from Jack Katzenell:

[Begin recording] Politicians are not exactly queuing up to react to the killing of Abu Jihad. The acting chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Labor's Mikha Harish, said he did not know all the facts and cannot comment, and I got no more joy out of the Likud. The Zionist left-wing opposition parties, MAPAM [United Workers Party], and the Citizens Rights Movement were no more forthcoming. One of their leaders said: Don't even quote me as saying no comment. He did not talk to me. Speaking off the record he said: Abu Jihad was no angel, and Israel has the right to kill terrorist leaders. The question is whether it was a smart thing to do at this time, and this will only become clear in time.

The Communist Party had no such inhibitions. Knesset Member Me'ir Wilner condemned the killing as criminal and state terrorism. He said it was aimed at perpetuating the occupation and blocking the way to an international conference with the participation of the PLO. By contrast, Ge'ula Kohen of the right-wing opposition Tehiya Party said: If Israel did not kill Abu Jihad, she should have, and the same treatment should be meted out to leaders of Islamic fundamentalist terrorist groups. Terrorist leaders are only too happy to send their followers to their deaths, Kohen said; the killing of Abu Jihad has reminded the planners that they too run a risk. [end recording] (endall)

Al-Wazir Murder Seen Affecting Peace Process

TA170500 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 17 Apr 88 pp 1, 2

[Report by diplomatic correspondent Menahem Shalev]

[Excerpts] Israel officials last night declined to comment on the killing of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir]. Many government officials expect that in the short term it will result in a new wave of terror and in increased turbulence in the territories.

There were conflicting views, however, on the effect the killing would have on a Middle East peace process. Sources in Jerusalem said that the PLO and the inhabitants of the territories would likely adopt a harder line toward the peace process. [passage omitted]

Most officials agreed that the killing of Abu Jihad, who was more popular than 'Arafat himself in many Palestinian circles, would make it nearly impossible for a peace process to proceed without the PLO. And since the killing was likely to result in at least a temporary hardening of the organization's positions, it would most likely hinder current peace efforts, be they Soviet or American.

"Although there was no more deserving character for this type of action than Abu Jihad," one official said, his death was likely to be "counter-productive" for peace.

Foreign Ministry officials said that as long as there was no proof of Israeli involvement in the Tunis operation, Israel's relations with Egypt would not be harmed. If Israel was perceived as the perpetrator, however, Egypt would have to take action, up to and including a recall of its ambassador here or expulsion of the ambassador in Cairo, the officials said.

But most officials predicted that the perpetrators of the act would not be uncovered in the near future. "The Arabs will think it's us in any case," one official said, "and the rest of the world doesn't care much." In any case, intelligence experts depicted the killing as a "shot of adrenalin" for both the external and internal facets of the Palestinian struggle. [passage omitted]

Sinyurah Blames Israel for Al-Wazir Death

TA160725 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0700 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that black flags were hoisted in several places in the territories as soon as the news that Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] had been murdered was received. Fayiz Abu Rahmah of Gaza, who is Abu Jihad's cousin, says that this is a tragedy for the Palestinian people, but he is convinced that people capable of replacing him will be found. Abu Rahmah was supposed to take part in the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation for the dialogue with the United States.

AL-FAJR Editor Hanna Sinyurah of East Jerusalem, who was also supposed to participate in the delegation, put the responsibility for the murder on Israel, saying that this proves that Israel does not want a peaceful solution through a dialogue with the PLO, the leadership of the Palestinian people.

Detention of Abu Jihad's Gaza Cousin Confirmed

TA171214 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 17 Apr 88 p A8

[Report by 'Ezra Yanuv]

[Text] The attorney Fayiz Abu Rahmah, Abu Jihad's cousin, was detained last Friday in Gaza and was released at dawn on Saturday. Security forces in the Gaza Strip confirmed the fact of the arrest, but refused to discuss the reasons for his detention and release.

Fayiz Abu Rahmah, Gaza Strip Bar Association chairman, who has been selected to sit on the Palestinian-Jordanian delegation to the peace negotiations as a man close to the PLO in Gaza, is also Abu Jihad's cousin.

Yesterday in the afternoon, Abu Rahmah and former judge Qidarah saved an Israeli cameraman employed by a foreign television network, from a lynching. The crew's car was burned.

Polish Statement Critical of Unrest Policy

TA151754 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] Israel will protest to Poland over a statement by the Polish Government criticizing Israel's handling of the Palestinian riots in the territories. The Polish Government spokesman, Jerzy Urban, said the Israeli actions were outrageous, brutal, and an insult to the memory of the Jewish defenders of the Warsaw Ghetto.

In Jerusalem, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Dani Schek said it is the comparison made by Urban that desecrates the memory of the Ghetto fighters and presents the Nazi holocaust as something banal. Israel's diplomatic representative in Warsaw, Mordekhay Paltzur, has been ordered to submit a protest. Israel's Transport Minister Hayim Corfu said Polish officials should check how many Polish workers were killed in Gdansk and elsewhere in the late 1960's and early 1970's before criticizing Israel.

Formal Protest Lodged

TA171210 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 17 Apr 88 p 2

[Report by diplomatic correspondent Menahem Shalev]

[Excerpts] Israel's representative in Warsaw, Mordechai Palzur, lodged a formal protest on Friday with the Polish Foreign Ministry over a government spokesman's statement last week that the handling of the disturbances in the territories insulted the memory of the defenders of the Warsaw Ghetto. [passage omitted]

Foreign Ministry sources said last night that the harsh Polish statement is apparently a reaction to Arab criticism of recent overtures made by the Polish government toward Israel and the Jewish people.

Rabin Reaffirms IDF Use of Standard Tear Gas

TA171949 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1830 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has made plain that the gas used by Israel's defense forces is the same tear gas used by police and security forces in many countries around the world, which is called CS [acronym in English]. Mr Rabin was replying to a parliamentary query of Knesset Member 'Oded Zucker of the Citizens Rights Movement.

Cabinet Briefed on Weekend Unrest in Territories

TA171029 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1000 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] The defense minister, the chief of staff, and the minister of police this morning briefed the cabinet on the disturbances over the weekend in the territories. Asked whether he would be briefing the cabinet on the assassination of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] Prime Minister Shamir said he had only heard about it on the radio.

Al-Wazir Murder Sparks Riots in Territories

TA161018 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Numerous disturbances took place in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza this morning after news of the death of Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad, 'Arafat's deputy, became known. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that many residents staged a symbolic funeral for him in Nabulus, and that they clashed with security forces. Worshippers in many mosques in the territories began to read Koran chapters in his memory, and black flags were hoisted. Nationalist elements called for a 3-day general strike.

A curfew was imposed on the Jabalyah and Al-Nusayrat refugee camps in the Gaza Strip. The Al-Shati' refugee camp has been under curfew since yesterday. Our correspondent reports many disturbances throughout the Gaza Strip, tire burning and stone throwing especially.

Waqf Calls for 3-Day Mourning

TA161322 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] The Supreme Muslim Council [Waqf] has declared 3 days of mourning beginning tomorrow to commemorate the death of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir]. The Supreme Muslim Council has also issued a call to bury Abu Jihad in the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

12 Killed, 40 Wounded 16 Apr

TA161831 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] The largest number of dead in the Samaria and the Gaza Strip since the beginning of the uprising, 12, was recorded today. Military sources said that 5 people were killed in disturbances in the territories today, and the circumstances in which 7 other people were killed are still being investigated. At least 40 people were wounded. Arab sources claim that 15 people were killed, 8 in the Gaza Strip and 7 in Samaria. Our correspondent Victor Nahmias reports that the assassination of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] shocked the inhabitants of the territories. Many considered him more important than 'Arafat himself, because being responsible for coordinating the terror acts in Israel and in the territories, he was in almost daily contact—via his aides—with many inhabitants of the territories.

Details of 16 Apr Casualties

TA161914 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] According to official reports, five people were killed in the Gaza Strip today. Two of them were shot in the village of 'Abasan when they were throwing Molotov cocktails at IDF soldiers. Three other inhabitants were killed when they rioted and endangered the lives of soldiers. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that the IDF is checking out reports of another two casualties in Rafah. In the village of 'Abasan a hand grenade was also thrown, but it did not explode.

Arab sources reported that nine people were killed in the Gaza Strip and that dozens were wounded. A curfew was imposed today on the Jabalyah, Al-Nusayrat, and Khan Yunus refugee camps, as well as in two neighborhoods in the vicinity of Rafah. Curfew was also imposed on 'Abasan.

The IDF is also examining reports on five dead in Judaea and Samaria. From hospitals in the territories it was reported that three persons were killed in Janin, one in Qabatiyah, and in the village of Hablah, near Qalqilyah, a woman was killed and her body was sent to the Abu Kabir Forensic Institute for an autopsy. According to official reports 10 rioters were wounded in Judaea and Samaria.

'State of Shock' Over Murder

TA171108 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1000 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Two Arabs were injured by army gunfire this morning when a crowd attacked an army patrol with axes outside the Nur al-Shams refugee camp near Tulkarm. This, while security forces remain on alert for any signs of violence in the wake of the assassination of PLO chief Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir]. Steve Rodan reports:

[Begin recording] One day after the assassination of Abu Jihad, and the administered territories remained in a state of shock. The Supreme Islamic Council has declared 3 days of mourning, stores are closed, public transportation has been curtailed, and most laborers have remained home. Even Arab municipalities are running at half speed.

Khalil al-Wazir was known to Israelis as one of the world's leading terrorists, but to young Arabs he was a symbol of Palestinian resistance, a leader of a generation of Arabs who defied both Arab regimes and challenged Israel, even if their means was through killing Jewish women and children.

All of the East Jerusalem Arabic dailies feature the killing as their lead story this morning. The exception is AL-FAJR, which was not published today in protest of what it said was censorship regulations. One assessment of Al-Wazir's killing came from Mustafa al-Natshah, the former mayor of Hebron. Mustafa al-Natshah said that the killing reminded him of the 1973 killing of PLO leaders in Beirut. The former mayor appeared to blame Israel and said its strategy was to stop the process of the international conference.

This morning the army appears prepared for any signs of trouble. Soldiers are on alert throughout the territories, and the army has placed under curfew 15 towns, villages, and refugee camps, including Nabulus. The only incident reported at this hour was an army patrol coming under attack at the Nur al-Shams refugee camp near Tulkarm. Military sources say local Arabs wielding axes rushed toward an army patrol. The soldiers fired and wounded two Arabs. [end recording]

The car of Police Commissioner David Kraus was struck by a stone this morning as it was passing through the Druze village of Majdal Shams on the Golan Heights. No one was hurt and no damage was caused. About 1,000 policemen have been deployed on the heights, to prevent any trouble in Druze villages as Syria marks its independence. The Voice of Israel's reporter Hayim Hecht says that so far the area is quiet, although a full-scale commercial and school strike is in force.

Earlier, Druze religious leaders on the Golan Heights called on their followers to act with restraint on Syria's independence day. On the Syrian side of the border, several hundred people have gathered, shouting anti-Israel slogans and demanding revenge for the killing of Abu Jihad.

This report just in: The Gaza Strip was reported generally quiet today as residents observed the 1st day of the 3 days of mourning following the death of Abu Jihad. A general strike was in effect throughout the Gaza Strip, as we hear in this report from Mark Weiss:

[Begin recording] The 1st day of mourning for Abu Jihad coincided with the beginning of the Muslim fast of Ramadan. It has turned Gaza into a ghost town today. A general strike was observed, schools were closed, and hardly any vehicles were seen on the streets. Gaza workers stayed at home. There were isolated incidents of tire burning and stone throwing, but the army reported no serious disturbances. According to army sources, yesterday's rioting resulted in at least 6 local residents killed and 25 injured from army fire. The signs of yesterday's disturbances are still in evidence: burned-out tires, stones on the roads, and the remains of roadblocks.

Abu Jihad's relatives in Gaza city have set up a large tent of mourning in the (Dalaj) neighborhood, surrounded by black flags. Inside the tent are large picture of Abu Jihad and Yasir 'Arafat. Among the hundreds of mourners in the tent this morning was Gaza lawyer and Abu Jihad's cousin Fayiz Abu Rahmah. He said the murder has already increased tension in the Strip, and this could continue in the days to come. He blamed Israel for the assassination.

Curfews remain in force in Al-Burayj, Jabalyah, Al-Shati', Khan Yunus refugee camp, and Rafah. [end recording]

'Tense Quiet' in Gaza Noted

TA171140 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Fifteen refugee camps, the town of Nabulus, and the village of 'Anabta are under curfew in Judaea and Samaria. This morning, the security forces declared the towns of Hebron, Bethlehem, Ramallah, Tulkarm, and Qalqilyah as closed military zones.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that there is a general commercial strike in Judaea and Samaria this morning. Local inhabitants hoisted black flags in many places in mourning for Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir]. Most of the workers from the areas did not leave for work in Israel, and the municipalities of Ramallah, Bethlehem, and Salfit are closed today.

In a riot today in Nur al-Shams, three youths who attacked IDF soldiers with axes were shot and wounded.

There is tense quiet in the Gaza Strip today. Many inhabitants hoisted Palestinian and black flags on houses. Most people did not go to work in Israel and most schools are closed. Many people are continuing to arrive at the homes of Abu Jihad's relatives in Gaza.

The curfew on the township of 'Abasun and the refugee camps of Jabalyah, Al-Shati', Al-Nusayrat, and Khan Yunus is still in effect.

The curfews on the Shabura and three other neighborhoods in the Rafah refugee camp continue. Gaza district police early today arrested the three sons of the local council head in the Al-Mu'azi refugee camp. The three are suspected of murdering their cousin.

The Jerusalem area was quiet this morning. There is a complete commercial strike in East Jerusalem. Black flags were hoisted in several places. The police are preventing Israelis and tourists from entering the Temple Mount, permitting only Arab residents to enter the compound. Our correspondent Moshe Nussbaum

reports that the police prevented Dr Mubarak 'Awwad from entering the Temple Mount. They asked him to present his identity card, but he replied that Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has it.

2 Wounded in Golan Protest

TA171343 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Disturbances in the Druze villages on the Golan Heights, where Druze are marking Syria's Independence Day, continued into the afternoon. Menahem Horowitz, our correspondent in the north, reports that the police used tear gas to disperse Druze villagers who tried to stage a demonstration in the center of Majdal al-Shams. Two demonstrators were wounded in the course of a brawl with the police and several others were arrested.

Thousands of Syrian citizens chanting nationalist songs and hoisting Syrian flags demonstrated throughout the day on the Syrian side of the border.

'Agitators' Wound Tulkarm Youth

TA171605 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 17 Apr

[Text] A 17-year-old youth from the Tulkarm area en route to work in Israel this morning was beaten up by agitators and suffered serious head wounds. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports the youth resisted the agitators' demand not to go to work in Israel and was subsequently hit on the head with a stone. The Civilian Administration in Judaea and Samaria took the youth to an Israeli hospital for treatment.

Our correspondent adds that recently there have been several incidents in which Arab workers resisted attempts to prevent them from working in Israel.

In Judaea and Samaria, curfews remain in effect in Nabulus, 'Anabta, and 15 other refugee camps.

The Janin area was quiet today but the commercial strike in the city continued, and only fruit and vegetable stalls were opened for the residents. Many laborers left for work in Israel.

Our correspondent Gabi Zohar reports from Janin that black flags were hoisted over some of the houses but there were no reports of riots or demonstrations.

4 Camps Under Curfew in Gaza

TA180527 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Early this morning the security forces lifted the curfew on the Rafah refugee camp. Four refugee camps now remain under curfew: Al-Nusayrat, Khan Yunus, Al-Shati', and Jabalyah, as well as the town of 'Abasan. A military source told our correspondent Moti Amir that quiet prevailed in the Gaza Strip last night.

Further on 17 Apr Unrest

TA180620 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 18 Apr 88 pp 1, 11

[Report by Joel Greenberg and Bradley Burston]

[Excerpts] The IDF yesterday closed off most of the West Bank to the media, restricted movement inside the region, and enforced curfews in Nabulus and 15 refugee camps in an attempt to choke off the violence that erupted in the aftermath of the assassination of PLO military chief Khalil al-Wazir. [passage omitted]

In Nabulus, ambulances and IDF jeeps were the only vehicles on the streets. Occasional shots rang out from various quarters of the city, as troops broke up isolated protests that erupted in defiance of the curfew.

A doctor at the Al-Ittihad Al-Nisa'i Hospital said he had been called to the facility because it had been left without medical staff. He said two victims of gunshot wounds had been brought from Sabastiyah, north of Nabulus, and three other youths from the Balatah camp had been admitted with injuries from beatings. Military sources reported that troops shot and wounded two youths at the Nur al-Shams refugee camp near Tulkarm after they attacked them with axes. Four Palestinians suffering from gunshot wounds were brought to the Bayt Jala Hospital, apparently following clashes in the town and the neighbouring Ayda refugee camp. A women's protest was also reported in Jericho.

Two makeshift pipe bombs were discovered and safely detonated near a bus-stop on the road to 'Ofra off the Jerusalem-Nabulus highway.

According to local sources, four Gazans were wounded in clashes with soldiers, but Southern Command officials said that to the best of their knowledge, no soldiers had fired at Gazans yesterday. [passage omitted]

Continuing a move initiated just prior to Al-Wazir's slaying, the Islamic Resistance Movement (Moslem Brotherhood) yesterday circulated leaflets calling on Gazans to observe selective boycotts of Israeli products.

Meanwhile, OC [Officer Commanding] Southern Command Yitzhaq Mordekhay yesterday sent messages to notables in Gaza refugee camps and urban centres, declaring the IDF's desire to "do everything possible to enable Gazans to observe the commandments of Ramadan." Among the steps proposed is shortening or lifting entirely the present 10 p.m. to 3 a.m. curfew over the entire Gaza Strip.

The following refugee camps were under curfew in the West Bank: Hanin, Nur al-Shams, Al-Fari'ah, 'Askar, Balatah, 'Ayn Bayt al-Ma', Tulkarm, Al-Jalazun, Qalandiyah, Al-Am'ari, Al-Duhayshah, Al-'Arrub, 'Ayn al-Fawwar, 'Azza, Ayda. [passage omitted]

Judaea, Samaria Media Ban

TA180729 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0700 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] In Judaea and Samaria, curfews remain in force in Nabulus and 'Anabta, as well as in about 15 refugee camps in the area. The security forces are also barring movement from one district to another. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that all these districts, as well as some other locations, have been closed to media coverage.

3 Arabs Get Life for Murdering Citizen in 1987

TA171248 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1230 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Three Arabs who admitted to murdering the late Yig'al Shahaf in the Old City of Jerusalem approximately 12 months ago were sentenced to life. The three are Khalid Tahir, who was the squad commander; 'Ammar al-Qawasimi, who shot Shahaf; and Samir Abu Sir, an accomplice. They were convicted by their own admission.

Our correspondent Yasmin Qeyni reports that prosecutor Lieutenant Re'uven Wolff will call the three as witnesses in the trial of the fourth conspirator, who is charged with smuggling the weapons and has pleaded not guilty on all counts.

Communist Editor Gets 15 Days in Jail

TA171359 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Ya'aqov Ben-Efrat, one of the editors of the newspaper DEREKH HANITZOTZ [WAY OF THE SPARK], today was remanded to custody for 15 days on suspicion of having committed misdemeanors related to the state security. Sara Frisch, the Petah Tiqva Magistrate Court judge, complied with the request of the police unit investigating serious crimes and banned the publication of any further details about the hearing, held behind closed doors. [passage omitted]

Gaza Arab Lawyers Call Off 3-Month Strike

TA171722 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Arab lawyers in the Gaza Strip have decided to call off the strike they began about 3 months ago and to resume representing administrative detainees in the area. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that some of them had already represented such detainees before military appeals committees at the end of last week. Local lawyers in Judaea and Samaria have not been on strike since the beginning of the uprising.

License of AL-'AWDAH Weekly May Be Revoked

TA171732 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] The Jerusalem District commissioner has informed the owners of the East Jerusalem weekly AL-'AWDAH that he is considering revoking their license. Our correspondent Arye Gus was told that the commissioner has attained prima facie evidence showing that the weekly is financed and controlled by the terrorist organizations and caters to their purposes. The owners of AL-'AWDAH may appeal this claim within 2 weeks.

Journalistic sources in East Jerusalem fear that the case of AL-'AWDAH heralds a new wave of steps to curtail the Arab press.

9 Jailed for Refusing To Serve in Territories

TA171921 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 19 Apr 88

[Text] Two more members of the Yesh Gvul [There Is a Limit] Movement were sentenced to jail today for their refusal to serve in the territories. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that Corporal Yig'al Vega was sentenced to 21 days in prison, while Corporal Yosef Isaacson was sentenced to 28 days. Nine people who refused to serve in the territories are now in military prisons.

Egyptian President Continues Visit 15 Apr

Arrives in Al-'Aqabah

JN151429 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] Al-'Aqabah—His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, as well as Her Majesty Queen Nur and President Mubarak's wife, arrived in the city of Al-'Aqabah this afternoon on a short visit. They are accompanied by a number of the Hashemite family members, the prime minister, and the members of the delegation accompanying His Excellency President Mubarak. They were received at Al-'Aqabah airport by senior officials in Al-'Aqabah District.

Mubarak, Delegation Depart

JN151539 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] Al-'Aqabah—His Excellency Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak and his wife left Al-'Aqabah airport this evening following a 2-day working visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, during which he held talks with His Majesty King Husayn and attended the grand military festival held by the Jordanian Armed Forces in Amman this morning on the 35th anniversary of His Majesty King Husayn's assumption of power, which falls on 2 May.

His Majesty King Husayn and Her Majesty Queen Nur were at the head of those who saw off President Mubarak and his wife. Also participating in the sendoff were a number of the Hashemite family members, Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i, senior officials in Al-'Aqabah District, and the Egyptian ambassador in Amman.

The Egyptian delegation, which comprised the deputy prime minister and foreign minister, the minister of transport and communications, and the minister of information, left with President Mubarak.

King Extends Condolences on Al-Wazir Death

JN171512 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1415 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Amman, 17 Apr (PETRA)—His Majesty King Husayn today sent a cable of condolences to Yasir 'Arafat, PLO Executive Committee chairman and commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, on the martyrdom of the Deputy Commander in Chief Khalil al-Wazir. Following is the text of the cable:

I extend to my honorable brother the warmest condolences on the martyrdom of the late Khalil al-Wazir, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, who was killed at the hands of treachery and crime in Tunis.

We felt anguish and sorrow at the martyrdom of one of the most prominent leaders of the Palestinian revolution who dedicated his life to the struggle to remove the Palestinian people's grievances and who worked deligently with his colleagues in the Palestinian leadership to regain the legitimate Palestinian rights on the pure Palestinian soil.

As we pray mercy for the deceased, we hope you convey our sincere condolences for his family.

Government Denounces Killing

JN161138 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1109 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] The occupied territories affairs minister and chairman of the Jordanian side to the Jordanian-Palestinian Joint Committee issued the following statement:

The PLO's leadership has issued a statement announcing the death of Khalil al-Wazir, deputy commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces and chairman of the Palestinian side to the Jordanian-Palestinian Joint Committee, who was assassinated this morning, Saturday, 16 April 1988, at his place of residence in Tunis. As the Jordanian Government offers its sincere condolences to the PLO and to the deceased's family, it announces its denunciation of this criminal act. The Jordanian Government prays that God will have mercy on the deceased and give his family patience and comfort. We belong to God and to Him we return.

Car Bomb Explodes in Amman Town Hall 16 Apr

NC161108 Paris AFP in English 1105 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Amman, April 10 (AFP)—A car bomb rocked the nine-storey headquarters of the Jordanian capital's town hall and started a blaze on Saturday, informed sources here said. It was not immediately clear if there were any casualties. The explosion occurred shortly before midday in the third level of the underground car park beneath the town hall, the sources said.

Firefighters brought the blaze under control while police evacuated town hall employees and residents of nearby buildings. Witnesses reported that a fire truck had ploughed into the wall of a nearby building, killing the driver and leaving another firefighter injured.

A blast ripped through the offices of the road safety administration in the northern suburbs of Amman on April 9, wounding two people.

The clandestine group "Black September" had claimed responsibility for the blast in a communique released in Beirut. The same group claimed the murder of a Jordanian diplomat in Turkey on July 24, 1985.

Official Spokesman Comments

JN161142 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1108 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] An official spoeksman has made the following statement: At 1125 today, Saturday, 16 April, an explosion occurred in a private vehicle that was parked on the second floor of the highrise parking garage on Prince Muhammad Street. The Amman Town Hall is located on the top three floors of the building. The incident resulted in the burning of the private vehicle.

The competent security organs inspected the scene of the incident after the civil defense men had extinguished the fire that resulted from the explosion. There have been no casualties or damage to the building.

Preliminary investigations have shown that the explosion was the result of a time bomb, weighing about 1/2 kg, attached to a gas tank.

The official spokesman would like to reitterate that this criminal incident occurred following Jordan's expression of its clear pan-Arab stand in defense of Arab rights in Palestine. It also occurred to divert attention from our kinfolk's uprising and steadfastness in the occupied territories and to serve hostile quarters that have recruited these traitorous agents to commit this despicable crime against the homeland and the citizens.

The competent organs are continuing to investigate this incident.

Al-Rifa'i Visits Site

JN161545 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Amman—His Highness Crown Prince Hasan visited the Amman town hall building this morning following the explosion of a bomb planted in the building by hired hands. Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i also visited the Amman town hall building.

His highness the crown prince and the prime minister met with a number of ministers, the Amman mayor, the Amman governor, the Amman police director, and a number of officials to reassure themselves about the measures taken after the deplorable incident.

Black September Statement

NC170647 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0630 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] In a statement it distributed in Beirut, the Black September organization has claimed responsibility for the explosion of the booby-trapped car in the Amman town hall building yesterday.

Government Protests U.S. Veto on UN Resolution

JN161116 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1100 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri received in his office this morning the U.S. ambassador in Amman and gave him the Jordanian Government's official protest over the recent American stand represented by the U.S. veto of a draft resolution introduced at the UN Security Council. [passage omitted]

Columnist on Israeli 'Crimes' in Amman, Tunis

JN180922 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 18 Apr 88 p 19

[The "An Issue and an Opinion" column: "Washington Turns a Blind Eye to Zionist Terrorism" by Salamah 'Ukur]

[Text] Israel's crimes in Amman and Tunis have shocked the conscience of the entire world. The Tel Aviv rulers have been exposed before world public opinion for what they are—professional terrorists. They have also made the world recall the series of their previous terrorist acts.

Detonating booby-trapped cars in civilian establishments and institutions, dispatching Zionist commandos to Tunisia, encroaching on the inviolability of an independent state in a barbaric invasion operation to assassinate the Palestinian struggler Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir] in an act demonstrating piratical violation of Tunisia's airspace, waters, and territory, and making continuous threats to chase and assassinate Palestinian leaders anywhere in the world, has placed Israel at the top of the world's list of terrorists.

However, the U.S. Administration continues to turn a blind eye to these terroristic acts, continues to defend the Tel Aviv rulers and their policy, and vetos any international resolution condemning Zionist terrorism. This U.S. stand does not surprise any of the Arabs.

The U.S. Administration has been ignoring the repressive Israeli acts in the occupied territories for more than 5 months. It has not made a single sign against these acts. On the contrary, the U.S. Administration's envoys hurried to the region in an attempt to abort the uprising and save Israel from its impasse.

We are accustomed to the U.S. Administrations' large-scale political and media campaign against the national Palestinian struggle and to its attempts to stigmatize this struggle and the Arab quarters supporting it as terrorists. This administration also sometimes imposes political and economic sanctions on these quarters and calls for a worldwide boycott of them.

However, the U.S. Administration turns a blind eye to the fall of hundreds of martyrs, thousands of wounded, and tens of thousands of detaines from the sons of the Palestinian people by the Zionist occupation forces. It

also ignores the occupation forces' use of bullets, clubs, and poison gas, as well as the burying alive of Arab citizens. It also forgets in this regard its calls for defending human rights and suspends its continuous slogans against terrorism and terrorists.

Moreover, the U.S. Administration participates in the Tel Aviv rulers' celebrations, signs with them a memo of strategic understanding, and unreluctantly announces readiness to defend them, their security, and their course and aggressive, expansionist policy.

After all this, is there anything that should make us hesitate for even one moment from placing the United States and Israel in the same trench?

Israel Miscalculated Reaction to Killing
JN181128 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
18 Apr 88 pp 1, 19

[Editorial: "Israeli Miscalculations"]

[Text] It seems that the Zionist enemy, which has carefully planned the assassination of Palestinian leader Khalil al-Wazir, alias Abu Jihad, and which wanted to abort the popular uprising in the occupied territories through this treacherous operation, has not yet learned to calculate the masses' reaction to these challenges. This has been clearly demonstrated following the announcement of the martyrdom of Abu Jihad.

In contrast to the Israeli leaders' desires, leader Abu Jihad's martyrdom has renwed the vigor of the popular Palestinian uprising that has been going on for over 130 days. In all cities, villages, and camps of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, thousands of men, women, old people, and youths took to the streets to express their anger and tempestuous revolt against the enemy and its criminal designs.

Since Israel knows only the policy of murder and genocide, it has retaliated against this legitimate Palestinian anger and grief by killing over 20 youths in the past 2 days and wounding and detaining several others. Israel did this to affirm to those who need affirmation that this aggressive state knows only the policy of steel and fire and the language of oppressive force vis-a-vis a people who are armed only with their strong faith in their right.

The severe escalation in the policy of terrorism and collective punishment which Israel is continuing against our kinfolk in the occupied territories is proof that the Zionist enemy's leaders enjoy resorting to murder, deportation, siege, and terrorism in all its forms, following the lack of any Arab reaction to these policies. They have even been directly encouraged to pursue this line by the latest U.S. veto in the Security Council.

We beleive that the martyrdom of one of the symbols of Palestinian national struggle against Israeli occupation will not weaken the uprising or deprive it of popular Palestinian determination to continue the struggle against the occupiers. We hope that these terroristic Israeli practices will be met with the international condemnation and denunciation they deserve. These measures also call for a collective Arab stand to restore some sense in the minds of the occupiers, who continue to disregard this nation's ability and energies for direct action.

Israel Seen Behind Al-Wazir Assassination
JN171016 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
17 Apr 88 p 4

[Editorial: "A Nation Fortified"]

[Text] The assassination of Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad), like the killing of so many other Palestinian leaders during the past two decades, is unlikely to change the course of events in the Middle East. Abu Jihad was a microcosm of the entire Palestinian national movement: He was a founding member of Fatah, and was deeply involved in Palestinian political and military activities since the mid-1960s. But since the mid-1970s, he has accepted the strategy of the mainstream Palestinian movements to maintain military pressure on Israel while exploring means of resolving the Arab-Israeli dispute on the basis of negotiations that would satisfy the national demands of both Israelis and Palestinians.

He represented the realistic, pragmatic and honourable Palestinian majority which has sought to find a compromise that would resolve the Palestine-Zionist conflict in a manner that was dignified and just. The fact that this approach has yet to yield results, and that Abu Jihad has paid with his life for his efforts, should wake up all concerned to the fact that a cycle of militarism and extremism is inevitable if the present conciliatory approach of the PLO and all the Arab states is not reciprocated by Israel and the United States.

It matters less who killed Abu Jihad than the fact of his death. Our inclination is to see the Israelis behind the killing, though others will blame extremist Palestinian or Arab groups who objected to Abu Jihad's policy. The fact is that extremists on all sides have reason to fear the moderation and pragmatism of Abu Jihad and his colleagues in the PLO. Israeli hardliners such as Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir are probably most concerned about the combination of the continuing uprising of the Palestinians under occupation and the unified policies of the factions within the PLO.

It is such a combination of determined resistance and a clear national political strategy which Israelis fear most, because it emphasises the inevitability of a Palestinian national entity in Palestine, which in turn must force the Israelis to contain their exaggerated sense of territorial conquest in the region. What the assassins of Abu Jihad fail to understand is that the Palestinian national movement is not one of individuals who can be killed and forgotten; it is a national struggle of some five million

people. Those five million are fortified today by the memory of Abu Jihad, and they will struggle with increased determination to achieve the national goals which Abu Jihad championed for so many years.

U.S. Security Council Vote 'Insult to Humanity'

JN181012 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
18 Apr 88 pp 1, 28

[Editorial: "Force Does Not Protect Illusions"]

[Text] The Zionist entity has received another U.S.gift. The timing and place of this gift has come as a declared blessing for all of the practices of the racist Zionist entity and all of its violations whether of international principles and pacts or all rights and values that humanity believes in and adheres to as the only standard for legitimacy. The use by the United States of the so-called "veto" in support of Zionist policies does not only constitute support for injustice, aggression, terrorism, murder, and deportations, but is also an insult to humanity and disregard for all values and principles advocated by the United States, beginning with human rights and ending with the talks about a "free world" where democracy and equality prevail.

In contrast, the great image of the Palestinian uprising, the heroic escalation to confront the enemy, and the determination to continue the popular struggle until victory makes these Zionist practices a new force to be added to the Palestinian force. This makes U.S. support for killings and deportations another proof that Washington has taken its place in the Zionist trench by fighting us, attacking our rights, and continuing its refusal to restore peace to the reigon through the restoration of Palestinian and Arab rights.

The Zionist assassination of martyr Khalil al-Wazir and the killing of scores of Palestinians who are fighting occupation with their faith and stones, and the U.S. veto in support of all of the enemy's practices are not only pointers to our long and bitter war with our nation's enemies, but also living facts which require a pan-Arab stand to rectify things. Those who suport the murder of Arabs are as hostile and cruel as those who commit the murder, and those who do not condemn the flouting of our rights and watch Arabs being butchered daily have not only stopped at that point, but have gone further to protect the killers even from international condemnation.

From our own and world observations of the Palestinian uprising, we can probably pause at certain small and great facts affirmed by the uprising. Neither has Zionist terrorism and racism, nor the daily killing of Palestinian citizens, deportation, and starvation succeeded in stopping the uprising. They also have not succeeded in restoring to the enemy its lost stability. The uprising's greatest achievment in the Zionist fumbling and imbalance in all of its institutions, and the beginning of the fall of the dream for those who believed that 40 years of occupation and the establishment of the Israeli entity would be an established fact. The uprising has come to prove that arrogance and acts of assassination, murder, and terrorism cannot prevent illusions from their final fate, which is to disappear.

Higgins Reportedly Killed During Clashes in South

NC180826 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0816 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] The Voice of Lebanon has learned that American Colonel William Higgins was killed during the recent clashes between the Amal Movement and Hizballah. He was buried in the town of Siddiqin in the south.

According to available details, before Amal stormed the town of Jibshit, Higgins was moved under the escort of Iranian Revolutionary Guards from Jibshit to Siddiqin, south of the Al-Litani River. When Amal stormed Jibshit, believing that Higgins was still there, the American colonel was killed and buried there.

According to the same information, a diplomatic car belonging to the Iranian Embassy had tried to reach Siddiqin in order to move Higgins to the southern suburb before his death. However, after it failed to reach Siddiqin, the decision was made to kill him in order to avoid handing him to Amal.

Report Termed 'Illogical'

NC180912 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0910 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] In a contact with NNA, UNIFIL Spokesman Timor Goksel has dismissed reports broadcast by private radios on the death of U.S. Colonel William Higgins and his burial in Siddiqin. He pointed out that the information on the subject is illogical.

Report 'Might Be Untrue'

NC181015 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1003 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Speaking to the NNA by telephone, UNIFIL Press Spokesman Timor Goksel has denied any knowledge of the report broadcast by a private radio concerning the killing of U.S. Lieutenant Colonel William Higgins. He added that this report might be untrue, particularly since the purpose of such an information campaign is known.

Islamic Jihad Reportedly To Free French Hostages

NC161453 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] A spokesman claiming to be speaking on behalf of the Islamic Jihad organization said 1 hour ago that the organization will release two French hostages within 7 hours. He called on correspondents and photographers to gather near the Summerland Hotel in West Beirut. The spokesman threatened that the two would be executed immediately if the security forces attacked the abductors.

Mughaniyah Negotiating

NC161746 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Will the three French hostages be released in the next few hours? This was predicted in a statement issued by Islamic Jihad this afternoon, saying that the release process has reached its final stages and that the hostages will be released within the next 7 hours. Foreign and local correspondents left for the Summerland Hotel this evening at the kidnappers' invitation. However, they have been unable to uncover any new information. They did note, however, that a senior security official from the French Embassy in Beirut arrived at the hotel at 1815. He left 20 minutes later, without appearing to have done anything. Will this scenario for the release end somewhere else? We will provide you with the details as soon as we receive them.

Now, more on the terrorism dossier. According to reliable reports conveyed by our correspondent, 'Imad Mughaniyah returned to Beirut from Tehran on Friday and began contacts with Algerian diplomats and Palestinian negotiators. He was joined by his comrade 'Abd al-Hadi Hamadah. They used the basement shelter of a building in the southern suburb as headquarters. Hamadah is accused of kidnapping West German Ralph Schray, who was later released. The reports add that Mughaniyah's men hijacked the Kuwaiti plane and have brothers detained in Kuwait. The reports also state that a deal is being negotiated for the release of the 32 passengers on the plane in return for allowing it to fly to Iran. This may also lead to the release of French hostage Jean-Paul Kauffmann and U.S. hostage Terry Anderson. Mughaniyah is negotiating this deal with Algerian diplomats. The reports also add that Mughaniyah is the brains behind Islamic Jihad.

Al-Jumayyil on Hostages, Al-Wazir Assassination

NC170805 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] President Amin al-Jumayyil has declared that the Lebanese problem is imported from abroad. In an interview he granted to Luxembourg radio and television yesterday afternoon, the president urged the world community to help Lebanon establish peace because it was an example of coexistence among the various factions.

Discussing the hostage issue, President al-Jumayyil said: The foreign hostages in Lebanon are detained not for Lebanese reasons but for external ones. He considered all of Lebanon as a hostage.

Answering a question, Al-Jumayyil said: We are open to a dialogue with Syria. I am working for such a dialogue because this serves the interests of both Syria and Lebanon in reaching an agreement which safeguards Lebanon's independence and sovereignty.

In his interview, President al-Jumayyil commented on Abu Jihad's assassination. He said that the Palestinian problem will not be solved by assassinations, terrorism, and killings. He added: The world community must act speedily in order to achieve a peaceful solution through an international conference, about which there is much talk now.

Al-Huss, Birri Condemn Al-Wazir Assassination

NC161240 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Acting Prime Minister Salim al-Huss and Minister Nabih Birri today condemned the assassination of Khalil al-Wazir.

Prime Minister al-Huss said: At a time when the uprising of the Palestinian people against the usurpers of their land is growing, the criminal assassination of Abu Jihad [Khalil al-Wazir]—one of the leaders of this people who are waging the most ferocious battle between good and evil—proves that the Israeli methods of repression and terrorism to abort the uprising have not been confined to the occupied territories. This crime proves that no right will be lost if one claims it, that the people's will cannot be subdued by any force, and that there can be no end to the Arab-Israeli conflict as a result of any settlement which disregards the Palestinian people's rights in their lands.

Minister Birri denounced the crime in the name of the Amal Movement, saying: We eulogize Al-Wazir as one who fought against Israel and struggled for regaining the betrayed homeland, particularly through his participation in the Palestinian action, the PLO, and multifaceted Islamic action. He is a great martyr of the uprising at home, which is some compensation for his loss.

Interview With Amal Leader Nabih Birri

PM180905 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 15 Apr 88 pp 17-19

[Interview with Nabih Birri, Amal Movement leader, minister of justice and hydroelectric resources, and minister of state for the south and reconstruction, by Thurayya 'Asi; date, place not given]

[Excerpts] AL-HAWADITH: How serious are the U.S.-Syrian-Lebanese negotiations?

Birri: I believe they are quite serious. Information leaked to me indicates that progress has been made on the issue of participation [in dialogue], but there are still some delaying tactics on the issue of abolishing political sectarianism. Here I say that if no timetable is drawn up for abolishing political factionalism, the question of participation becomes a mere formality and will amount to nothing more than a modification of sectarian positions without any real progress. Failure to abolish political sectarianism will not only delay the solution, but also shelve the problem for some time.

AL-HAWADITH: Regarding these negotiations, it has been said that the negotiator is not so much the [Lebanese] regime as the Americans taking part in the talks. What is your view?

Birri: The question now is: What interest does the United States have in the Lebanese-Lebanese dialogue? Does the United States have an interest in this matter? I maintain that the Palestinian uprising is the cause of the American move. Had it not been for that uprising, the Americans would not have moved, because they had already downgraded the Lebanese question, as seen through their eyes. Now, however, we see the Lebanese question coming to the surface both in the U.S. secretary of state's tour of the region and in the contacts of his deputy or the U.S. State Department official in charge of Lebanese, Syrian, and Jordanian affairs. This activity is a result of the uprising in Palestine. The Americans are acting today in the interest of Israel. The truth is that there can be no solution to the Lebanese problem unless its Palestinian links are taken into consideration, and now the situation seems to have been reversed in that a settlement of the Palestinian question cannot be tackled without taking into consideration the Lebanese question. [passage omitted]

AL-HAWADITH: How do you interpret the Israeli escalation in the south?

Birri: I had previously expressed my opinion when I said that it was going to be a hot spring in the south and that, under the pressure of the resistance, the Israelis would try to mount operations and to destroy, kill, and displace people, that they might revive the memory of their massacres in Kafr Qasim, Al-'Abbasiyah, and other places, and that they might evict people to deprive the resistance of the support of the population on the ground, and employ scorched earth tactics to weaken the resistance. There clearly was such an attempt in Kafr Rumman and Jba', where 125-mm and 110-mm bombs were used in an attempt to terrorize the population. Most of the martyrs, whose ages ranged between 50 and 70, were killed with axes, but all this will only intensify the resistance. Israel's aim is to obstruct any solution to the Lebanese problem. [Passage omitted]

AL-HAWADITH: How do you assess the state of the resistance in the south, classified in such categories as "Islamic," "nationalist," "faithful," and so on?

Birri: There is no disintegration in the ranks of the resistance, but a new trend is growing within the resistance which reminds us of the pre-1982 situation, and I believe it is wrong. From 1982 until the Israeli withdrawal, the resistance in the south, especially the Amal Movement resistance, was based on studying, ambushing, and confronting the Israelis. As for the method of rockets and artillery shelling, I believe that is the Israeli way and I believe it is wrong for the resistance to use it. We must learn from past mistakes and absorb the new

lessons. So, we repeat that there is no disintegration in the resistance, but a kind of zeal for easy options which are counterproductive for us and for the resistance.

AL-HAWADITH: That may be the case with the Islamic resistance, but what about the nationalist resistance, particularly as we hear voices saying that the road to the south should be open to the resistance?

Birri: I am sorry, but the road to the south is open to everyone. Every day we hear statements about operations mounted by the Islamic, nationalist, or Lebanese resistance. If the road to the south was closed, how did these people reach it? We open the way to everyone wishing to fight Israel. If we arrest some, it is not because they want to fight the enemy but because they simply want to brandish their weapons in areas quite remote from enemy positions. When the first withdrawal from Sidon was carried out, Amal did not go and deploy rockets there or shell the Israelis from there because this would have rebounded against Sidon itself. We reject installation of rockets in Tyre or Al-Nabatiyah because the result would be counterproductive.

AL-HAWADITH: There has been talk of a joint operations room for the resistance. What has become of that?

Birri: Such a room has been set up and there is an official in charge. We have contacted all the parties and asked them to send their representatives for coordination. We are not against anyone, but we reject the method of showing off. We also are not a substitute for the state. The Amal Movement will give up its security mission as soon as a capable legitimate force is available.

AL-HAWADITH: At every stage there occurs some activity within the framework of a front to deal with urgent situations. Now the presidential election date is approaching. What is your position vis-a-vis front action?

Birri: We did everything in our power to work with the parties of the nationalist movement in a front framework but, regrettably, we were always stabbed in the back. That is why we declare, through AL-HAWADITH, that the Amal Movement is no longer a part of any nationalist front. It is a part of the general nationalist movement without being a member of a unified organization of the nationalist movement. The [Amal] Movement's charter states that it is a Lebanese, Arab, faithful movement. We therefore will never be a party to any front-framework action after today, because we have been bitten so many times. We formerly participated in several fronts producing some good results, such as in the battle of the mountain, the southern suburb, and 6 February. But in the end these relationships were spoiled because of the attacks on us in the name of the so-called "camps war." We participated in the National Union Front and in the Unification and Liberation Front, but now we have lost faith in all front work. So, in view of the failed experiments, we can no longer deceive ourselves or the public. We entered into an alliance with the Progressive Socialist Party [PSP] and scored significant victories because we managed to destroy the Israeli era and revive the Arab era, but soon that alliance was spoiled and then there was failure and more failure.

AL-HAWADITH: What, in your view, were the causes of the failure?

Birri: There was the Palestinian factor and foreign interference related to the general structure in Lebanon and the attempts to rebuild or divide it, and so forth, especially in connection with the resistance in the south.

AL-HAWADITH: Let us dwell on what happened recently between you and the PSP, particularly at the B'aqlin festival. Could you explain the differences?

Birri: There are no real differences with the PSP, and I care about my friendship with Minister [and PSP leader Walid] Junblatt, bearing in mind that differences of opinion should not ruin friendship or any cause. There are no alliances with the PSP or the nationalist movement parties, but, as far as coordination goes, we coordinate on many issues without being a part of any front. [Passage omitted]

AL-HAWADITH: You are the only one insisting on accord before elections.

Birri: Who can convince me that changing the person of Amin al-Jummayil would resolve the crisis? We might bring someone or other to take his place, but I am sure that such a person would only be managing the crisis. It is not a question of individuals.

AL-HAWADITH: Would you disrupt the elections?

Birri: Yes, I would if I could, for a month or two in the hope achieving accord. Disruption of the elections for such a period would be better than a continuation of the crisis for 6 more years, which would mercilessly finish Lebanon off. [Passage omitted]

AL-HAWADITH: The Tripartite Agreement has been canceled and with it the role of the negotiating [Christian] party represented then by Elie Hubayqah, former chairman of the Lebanese Forces Executive Committee...

Birri (interrupting): No, Elie Hubayqah's role was not canceled. Elie Hubayqah was the Lebanese Forces commander, but the Lebanese Forces are still there. It should be remembered that Elie Hubayqah was not the only signatory. I insisted that the signing not be restricted to just three persons and, indeed, the signing ceremony became a national convention attended by, in addition to Elie Hubayqah, six or seven others [on the Christian side], including [Lebanese Forces Executive Committee

Deputy Chairman] Karim Paqraduni. True, he did not sign, but he was there, which, in the political sense, meant that he approved of the agreement.

AL-HAWADITH: Who now is Hubayqah's replacement as negotiator?

Birri: Hubayqah did not negotiate in his personal capacity. He represented a certain group. We are now negotiating with the other parties, albeit through middlemen. I mean the Americans and the Syrians are playing the part of mediator between the two sectors of the regime.

AL-HAWADITH: That means that there is no hope of a dialogue with the Lebanese Forces.

Birri: There is always hope of dialogue, as soon as they [the Lebanese Forces] declare and prove disengagement with Israel. Before he started negotiating, particularly with Amal, Elie Hubayqah sent several messages to the Syrian brothers emphasizing that he had broken off his links with Israel. We had reservations after the first, second, and third messages, until we were convinced that he had indeed chosen the Arab option. So, let [Lebanese Forces Executive Committee Chairman] Dr Ja'ja' confirm termination of his links with Israel and declare acceptance of the Arab option. We would then be willing to negotiate. God is merciful and compassionate, so why shouldn't his subjects be?

AL-HAWADITH: How do you assess the situation in the eastern sector [of Beirut] after the recent incidents?

Birri: There are many contradictions in the eastern sector. The fact that they have not reached the point of a big explosion is a matter not of conviction but of fear that if it did occur the people of West Beirut would rejoice at their misfortune. [Passage omitted]

AL-HAWADITH: Do you expect incidents to occur in the eastern sector?

Birri: Many incidents occur daily.

AL-HAWADITH: If no accord is achieved before the elections, do you expect military battles to be waged against the eastern sector?

Birri: Emphatically not. We are against any military action.

AL-HAWADITH: Even if that was imposed upon you?

Birri: Nothing can be imposed upon us.

AL-HAWADITH: Perhaps military action against Samir Ja'ja'?

Birri: Not at all. There is no possibility of military victory for one side over the other. Military options have produced no results. This has been Amal Movement's position since 1975. Musa al-Sadr remained alone in Al-Hazimiyah [Christian stronghold in Beirut], standing against isolation and urging dialogue despite all accusations. We were the last to join in the military battles; when the Al-Nab'ah, Al-Shiyah, and other incidents occurred we were forced to enter the battle. I hope they do not force us again.

AL-HAWADITH: This means that fighting might be forced upon you.

Birri: Self-defense is legitimate.

AL-HAWADITH: Let us go back to the situation in the south and the recent tension with Hizballah as a result of the kidnapping and assassination operations.

Birri: The tension between us and Hizballah or any gunmen is due to security reasons, not ideological reasons or reasons of requirements for fighting Israel. Anyone who allows security tasks to be assigned to a certain group must submit to the security requirements; but to have this task assigned to one group and then begin to kidnap, kill, steal, and try to turn the south into another West Beirut is something that we reject. That is why we invited the ulema and the influential circles in the south to voice an opinion and ask Amal to keep out if that is what they wanted. Amal would appreciate that, because we are paying a high price for the security task and we could have used the officials in charge of security in the fight against Israel. Any aggression on the south is an aggression against the Amal Movement so long as we are responsible for security. There is a Shi'ite Higher Islamic Council, so let Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, the father of this sect, say keep your hands off and we would do just that. We do not reap any benefit from this task which has been assigned to us and we are not about to seek protection money, because we are not about to set up a civilian or security administration. We are against that. [Passage omitted]

AL-HAWADITH: Let us move on to the Palestinian question and let us begin with the issue of the camps war, which is over and gone forever, according to what you have been saying repeatedly.

Birri: God willing

AL-HAWADITH: That leaves the matter of reconstruction. What are the obstacles?

Birri: The problem is financial, that is all.

AL-HAWADITH: But funds have been allocated.

Birri: We have read about the allocation of some funds by the Arab League. There are no problems between the Movement and the Palestinian brothers. The committees are meeting regularly. Reconstruction costs a lot of money. We hope to give the job to major companies that can finish it quickly.

AL-HAWADITH: An Arab League delegation, including [PLO official] Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh has visited Beirut and held talks on opening a PLO office in Beirut. What is your opinion?

Birri: It is strange that those who have raised a clamor about the question of opening a PLO office are the same people who, during the camps war, supported Abu 'Ammar ['Arafat] and backed him with men and arms. Is the opening of a PLO office more dangerous than that? We support Palestinian political and informational action and we fully support their legitimate rights. We are against the Palestinians on two matters: resettlement [of Palestinians in Lebanon] and confiscation of Lebanese decisionmaking. As regards the opening of a PLO office, that is a intra-Palestinian matter first, and second a matter to be decided by the Lebanese Government, not the Amal Movement. Amal supports PLO political and information activity, and we have taken a clear stand against the United States for its decision to close the PLO's UN office.

AL-HAWADITH: You met with Nayif Hawatimah in Algiers. What are the results of these meetings?

Birri: We did everything we promised, and many times more than that. It remains for them to do what they promised. We said that what we did was our gift to the uprising, thus honoring our pan-Arab duty to the Palestinian people. They now have to do their duty to the people of the south. The meetings stopped at that point, but our meetings with the Palestinian brothers are still continuing.

AL-HAWADITH: Have you arrived at any formula?

Birri: No. On the matter of a formula in the full sense of the word, we have not achieved anything.

AL-HAWADITH: And you do not expect that to be achieved in the near future?

Birri: There are no problems. The meetings are continuing. Some focus on reconstruction of the camps and some on the future of Lebanese-Palestinian relations. So, things are moving. [Passage omitted]

Israeli Warplanes Fly Over Sidon, Camps

15 April Incident

NC151249 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] Israeli warplanes flew over Sidon and the camps this morning, drawing antiaircraft fire. In another development, it has been reported from the south that Israeli occupation forces carried out a storming and arrest campaign in the town of Shab'a and its neighboring areas because the citizens there refused to join Antoine Lahd's militia.

17 Apr Incident

NC171303 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Tension is high on the Kafr Falus, Liba', and 'Ayn al-Mir axes, where clashes are taking place between positions hold by the Lahd militias and the Popular Liberation Army—Martyr Ma'ruf Sa'd forces.

In another development, an Israeli warplane flew over Sidon and its camps today, drawing antiaircraft fire.

Strict Security Measures on Southern Border

NC171723 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] The occupation forces this morning adopted strict security measures along the border between Palestine and Lebanon. Persons arriving from Marj 'Uyun today reported that tens of armored vehicles and hundreds of soldiers were seen on both sides of the southern border today, on a state of constant alert. The agent armed groups have also been on alert, fearing possible attacks by Lebanese and Palestinian resistance men against targets inside the occupied southern area and occupied Palestinian territory. Military observers linked these measures with the assassination of Palestinian leader Khalil al-Wazir in Tunis at dawn yesterday. These sources estimate the Israeli force moving on both sides of the border today at 150 armored vehicles and more than 2,000 soldiers.

Palestinian Killed at Border

NC172030 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] A Palestinian source in Rashayya has stated that a Palestinian fighter has been killed and another wounded in a clash with an Israeli patrol in the south as they were trying to infiltrate northern Israel. The source said that the clash took place on the western slope of Mount Harmon, inside the security zone. Israeli units supported by helicopters have embarked on a search for other infiltrators.

Further on Border Buildup

NC180709 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0700 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] The occupied Lebanese land is currently the scene of huge Israeli activities. The Israeli military authorities have taken stringent security measures along the international border lines with Lebanon. Hundreds of soldiers and scores of armored cars have been spotted in the area. Meanwhile, agent Lahd's militiamen have been placed on a state of alert.

Explosions Reported in Beirut 16 April

NC161210 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1155 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Two explosions resounded in the Beirut area a short time ago. The cause or venue of the explosions have not as yet been determined.

Amal, Hizballah Clashes Continue in South

Hizballah News Conference

NC111902 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 11 Apr 88

[Text] Hizballah has ended its silence. At a news conference today, Scholar Ibrahim al-Amin defined Hizballah's position on the clashes with the Amal Movement that took place in the south and left 50 people dead and about 70 wounded.

Beginning the news conference, which was held at the Imam al-Husayn Mosque area in Al-Qantari, Al-Amin said: This was a plot to steal everything and kill everyone. We are facing terrorism, misdeeds, and insults of every kind, taking the form of killings, detentions, and raids. We have also seen the establishment of roadblocks to obstruct the resistance fighters, the confiscation of their weapons, the detention of resistance fighters, looting, and the mistreatment and insulting of the ulema. They went so far as to search those attending the funeral of the wife of one of our great scholars, disrupt ceremonies and marches, and surround the religious education institutions.

Al-Amin accused the Amal Movement of killing three wounded Hizballah members. He said that a small group of thugs attacked the Islamic republic's cultural center in Tyre, tore up a photograph of Imam Khomeyni, and burned the flag of Islam. He called for the immediate release of all Hizballah detainees and for an end to all attacks.

Meanwhile, Mahmud Faqih, the Amal Movement's official for organizational affairs, said today that the Amal Movement decided to resolve the situation in the south after a Hizballah decision to launch a campaign against it had taken it by surprise. He said: We are ready for understanding and dialogue with Hizballah if it abandons its plan to cause disruption in the south.

Amal Official Comments

NC112104 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 2000 GMT 11 Apr 88

[Text] Asked about the background to recent events in the south, Mahmud Faqih, Amal Movement official for organizational affairs, said: The Amal Movement has repeatedly warned of the likelihood of developments and events such as those that took place in the south and of the danger of reaching a situation that would be impossible to control. We have always dealt with kidnappings and assassinations. Then came the attack by Hizballah elements against the roadblock in Haruf which was manned by regular forces of the Amal Movement, an attack that could not be overlooked. We asked that the perpetrators of the attack be handed over to us. But we were surprised to discover that Hizballah had decided to launch a battle against us. Therefore, the Movement had to resolve the matter and safeguard the security of the south and the resistance.

Regarding future relations between the Amal Movement and Hizballah, Faqih said: First of all, we must find out whether Hizballah wants to pursue its plan to disrupt the situation in the south or whether it intends to reevaluate what happened. We will decide on our position accordingly. We are ready for understanding and dialogue on principles which are known to everyone. Any attempt to undermine security in the south is unacceptable, regardless of the circumstances.

15 Amal Members Killed

NC130637 Marj 'Uyun Lebanon Voice of Hope in Arabic 0600 GMT 13 Apr 88

[Text] Amal Movement executive official in the south Dawud Dawud has disclosed that 15 members of the Amal Movement were killed and 80 others injured in the recent clashes with Hizballah. Dawud said that the Movement has arrested Hizballah members, adding that Hizballah institutions in the south will continue to work but under Amal Movement supervision.

Further Amal Comments

NC131829 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 13 Apr 88

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] A responsible source in the Amal Movement today responded to Hizballah, saying that incidents in the south were aimed at taking the situation there back to the conditions prevailing prior to 1982. The source continued: We have proof of an intention to create a schism between the sons of Imam al-Sadr and those of Imam Khomeyni.

The source appealed to all parties to listen to reason and heed religious obligations. The source reiterated Amal's commitment to abide by decisions made by Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams al-Din, deputy chairman of the Higher Islamic Shi'ite Council, the investigating committee formed by the Council, and any envoy sent by Imam Khomeyni to nip the sedition in the bud, bring the situation back to normal, and devote all resources to fighting the Zionist enemy.

More Accusations Exchanged

NC140701 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0415 GMT 14 Apr 88

[Text] Subhi al-Tufayli, Hizballah official in Al-Biqa', has affirmed that the Amal Movement is an ally of Israel and does not participate in the resistance. He said: We

are determined to fight the Jewish state and we will be compelled to fight its ally. He charged the Amal Movement with wanting to control southern Lebanon and using it as a potential bargaining chip. Al-Tufayli expressed the view that the purpose of the recent Hizballah-Amal clashes in the south was to pave the way for American plans in the region. The Islamic movement is the target, he said, because it constitutes a challenge to these plans for the Middle East. He declared that no one can use southern Lebanon as a bargaining chip in negotiations at international conferences. Those who have been ordered to strike at the sacred Islamic march must realize that they will not be able to carry out this American mission, he added.

Meanwhile, an Amal official has accused Hizballah of launching a campaign of slander, provocation, and distortion of facts. He said that Amal will not allow frivolous people to attempt in any way to destroy the resistance, divide Muslims, or alter the situation in favor of Israel. The Amal official noted that the Movement was the first to resist the Israelis. It was established for this purpose and will not accept any oneupmanship, he added.

Hizballah Builds Barricades

NC161252 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] At 1345 today, gunfire was exchanged on the contact lines in the Mar Mikhayil area of Beirut's southern suburb. The exchange of gunfire took place after a Hizballah tractor was seen building barricades and fortifications in the Mar Mikhayil area for the 3d consecutive day.

Amal Plans New Action

NC170748 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Arab intelligence sources in Beirut report that the Amal Movement has secretly began to transport some of its cadres and weapons to the Al-Biqa' in preparation for the implementation of the second phase of weakening the Hizballah's strongholds in Lebanon. The cadres involved are members of the special forces that Amal formed at the end of 1979, and which are trained by Syrian instructors of the Syrian commandos battalion in Lebanon.

The Amal Movement is reportedly planning a campaign, with Syrian backing, against the Hizballah's strongholds in Mashgharah and Suhmur. Furthermore, the Syrian forces in the Al-Biqa' reportedly have declared a state of maximum alert to confront a possible resumption of fighting between Amal and Hizballah. In this regard, it has been learned that Major General Sa'id Bayraqdar, commander of the Syrian forces in Lebanon, and Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an, chief of Syrian intelligence in Lebanon, met with [Amal official] 'Aqil Hamiyyah in Ba'labakk last week, where they discussed expanding the scope of the clashes between Amal and Hizballah in the Al-Biqa'.

Fadlallah Calls for Dialogue

NC171824 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, spiritual guide of Hizballah, has vehemently attacked the Amal Movement, without actually naming it. He deplored the looting of the Iranian aid center in Al-Nabatiyah, saying that oppressed people do not do such things unless they are urged to do so by others. He added: We do not approve of harming the Islamic revolution or its symbols at any time, for if we do so, there will be no difference between us and those fighting us.

Fadlallah also called for returning the weapons that have been confiscated from the groups resisting Israel, terming those who have seized the weapons of resistance fighters usurpers who have no right to them. Referring to the detainees held by Amal, who number about 1,000, Fadlallah called for their release, saying their detention has no justification under canonical law. Fadlallah noted that there are anxiety and shortcomings in the arena and called for a responsible dialogue, now that the dialogue of bullets has failed.

Hizballah Forms Joint Command

NC180714 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] According to security sources in the southern suburb of Beirut, Hizballah and Iranian Revolutionary Guards have set up a joint command, the aim of which is to assassinate high-ranking Amal officials and to carry out operations against Amal checkpoints and centers. According to the same sources, Amal's Security Department, which is headed by Bassam Tulays, is aware of this joint Hizballah-Iranian Revolutionary Guards activity.

Meanwhile, the Amal Movement is aware of the possibility that Hizballah may attempt to reorganize its ranks with Palestinian support. Within this context, it has been learned that Dawud Yunis, officer in charge of the pro-'Arafat Fatah forces in the south, met in the 'Ayn al-Hulwah Camp with Hizballah official Al-Haj 'Abd al-Latif Sulh and discussed with him the military aid that Fatah can give to Hizballah. The Fatah command in Lebanon is apprehensive about Amal's attempts to remove Fatah positions located east of Sidon.

Afghanistan

Najibullah Addresses Geneva Accords Kabul Rally

LD171938 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1630 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Speech by President Najibullah at 16 April Kabul meeting to mark the signing of the Geneva accords—recorded]

[Text] Dear compatriots, sisters and brothers, residents of heroic Kabul: The day of peace that our people have consistently searched for has arrived. We have come a long way in our search, and the best of our sons and daughters have shed their blood and sacrificed their beloved lives. This day is 14 April, 1988. This day brought to every Afghan's home, to each of us, happiness and hope; hope for immediate and secure peace. No doubt this day with all its national grandeur will take a meritorious place in the history of our country along with other historic events. Our people rightfully call this day the day of peace. Fourteen April can rightly be called the day of victory of good over evil, life over death; the victory of wisdom and rationality over ignorance and unreasonableness; and the victory of our political thought.

Our happiness at the successful completion of the Geneva talks on Afghanistan is not incidental. We have had to overcome many obstacles caused by a lack of trust and confidence on the part of the other side, and many times we have despaired over their lack of good intentions, valor, and constructiveness and realism. The key to the Geneva success is contained in the jointly-drafted, rational, progressive Afghan-Soviet view on doing away with this long, difficult, and painful regional dispute while taking into account the interests of all sides.

The policy of national reconciliation which was declared in January 1987 fundamentally contributed to the speed with which the political solution of the internal situation and the situation around Afghanistan was achieved. Afghan-Soviet measures were increased during recent months and played a valuable role in the success of the Geneva talks. These measures were manifested in the declaration by the leader of Afghanistan and Esteemed M.S. Gorbachev on Afghanistan dated 8 February 1988; the Afghan-Soviet joint communique in Tashkent; and, similarly, in their feelings of responsibility, flexibility, realism, political courage, resoluteness, and good intentions.

The Geneva talks were the final stage. All the documents that were negotiated by the Afghan and Pakistani sides were signed. Foreign impediments in the way of assuring peace in this wretched land, Afghanistan, have been removed.

Allow me on the occasion of this great historic event, at the behest of the Republic of Afghanistan, to offer my best and cordial congratulations to you, my dear compatriots, who have spent many years in painful sorrow in the undeclared imposed war, and to you, vagabound refugee brothers, who have spent many years in desperation over being separated from this country.

Dear compatriot brothers, you received the information that agreements were signed between the Republic of Afghanistan and Pakistan. These agreements were the result of the constructive cooperation of all those who were interested in a political solution for Afghanistan. The documents signed in Geneva on the political solution to Afghanistan include a document on noninterference and nonintervention.

In line with this document the two sides undertake to respect each other's sovereignty, political independence, and territorial integrity. Neither side will allow its territory to be used for the violation of the other's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, or political, economic, or social stability. They are to refrain from armed interference, sabotage, and other types of interference and covert or overt interference in the other's affairs. They are to refrain from training, arming, financing, and employing mercenaries from any source for the purpose of hostile activities against each other, and they are to refrain from transporting mercenaries to each other's territory. Any assistance to terrorist groups, saboteurs, or subversive agents; using them; or financing them against each other is prevented. The presence, stationing in camp and bases, and other types of organizing, training, financing, mobilizing, or arming of political and tribal individuals and groups or any other group for the purpose of the creation of subversion, chaos, or unrest in the other's territory is prevented.

Another document concerns the Soviet contingents' return to their country. In line with this, the Soviet Union's internationalist troops who came to our assistance at a difficult time at the request of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan, and played a decisive role in safeguarding our independence, freedom, and territorial integrity, starting 15 May will return to their country over the course of 9 months. Fifty percent will pull out in the first 3 months of this timeframe. The Afghan people will see off these troops to their great country with great respect and gratitude as messengers of peace, justice, and progress.

There is a document dealing with the voluntary return of refugees from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Afghanistan. In line with this document no one has the right to prevent the voluntary return of refugees, and all Afghan refugees who live in Iran and Pakistan will be allowed to return voluntarily to their country. All returnees are totally exonerated and will not be prosecuted for any deed or act related to the time before their return. The right to freely choose their place of abode, move freely in the country, work, participate in civil activities,

freedom of religion, and the assurance of equal rights in all facilities provided by the state for the citizens of Afghanistan are entirely guaranteed for the returnees. In accordance with this document, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has a responsibility to the United Nations to provide facilities for the voluntary, regular, and peaceful return of all Afghan refugees from that country.

In accordance with the document on the control mechanism, representatives of the United Nations shall not allow anyone to prevent the return of refugees. I am utterly sure that in signing the Geneva agreements, together with implementing the national reconciliation policy, the Republic of Afghanistan brought about an expedient opportunity to solve the Afghan situation, cease fratricide and war, establish peace across our beloved country, and form a broad-based coalition government including those forces which continue to confront each other.

Dear compatriots, I cannot believe the enemies of peace and national accord still stipulate that they will attain their vicious goals through the power of arms or the continuation of fratricide and bloodshed. On behalf of the Republic of Afghanistan and the valorous people of Afghanistan, who are thirsty for peace and security, I want these individuals warned with utter resoluteness that they will face the steely determination of the people of Afghanistan.

Let those who do not accept the call of wisdom and conscience recall this proverb of our people: the punishment of a clay-throwing person is stone. In pursuing the national reconciliation policy we are against the situation developing in this manner. The coalition promotes our sovereignty and multiparty system, provides real guarantees for the interests of various strata in society, and eliminates any reason for continued hostility, distrust, and armed confrontation.

We call on all real patriots of Afghanistan to participate actively in the process of national accord and cooperate in attaining the noble goals of peace and tranquility in our ancient land and build a just and flowering society. History has once again put Afghans to the test of safeguarding independence and territorial integrity, and defending the country's dignity and honor. We utterly believe that our people, like their forefathers, will defend their country with devotion and sacrifice. Our heroic armed forces, as a trustworthy shield of defense for the country, people, and implementation of the national reconciliation policy, discharge their valiant role. They are ready to resolutely defend peace, security, tranquility, and the people's sovereignty in the Republic of Afghanistan.

Presently, as a result of the Geneva agreements, the obstacles that were separating us have been removed. We offer peace to every compatriot. There is no life without differing points of view. The important thing is to overcome differences. Many times in our history Afghans have differed to the extent that it caused bloodshed and war. However, they have found a way to alleviate their differences in Afghan style, which was bequeathed by our forefathers through consultation. The Republic of Afghanistan will resolutely follow this method.

The Constitution of the Republic of Afghanistan lays a stable legal foundation, based on national reconciliation, for the freedom of political parties and for the establishment of a multiparty system, regardless of political ideas and views. It encourages the coalition organs to actively participate in maintaining national peace and social life. Various parties have started their political activities in practice.

The formation of the coalition government, as declared by the Republic of Afghanistan, has general and all-round characteristics. It includes all social personalities—tribal and clan elders, national capitalists and businessmen, clergy, armed opposition groups inside the country, realist social and political personalities abroad, and the leaders of moderate Islamic groups based in Pakistan and Iran. I repeat that the heads of the armed opposition groups inside the country enjoy our respect because they have not left the country. They will have a better and greater share in the coalition administration than the others. In the coalition government every Afghan will find a propitious place in this peaceful country. The Republic of Afghanistan will not ignore the interests of any social class, stratum, or group, and will create practical opportunities for their participation.

I, on behalf of all Afghans who want peace, address the representatives of the armed opposition to answer positively to the call of wisdom, and the hope of the people who are tired of war and look forward to long-lasting peace. The Koran says if they are inclined to peace thus you also express an inclination toward it and rely on God because he is wise and clear sighted.

Leaders of the opposition, I once again address you. Return to your country. Come to your cities and villages. Publish your newspapers. Open your offices. Our people have made up their minds about peace and security. Their program, goals, and plans are clear—in one word, peace. Now it is your turn. Come and explain what you want. Come and try to achieve your aims, but only through peaceful means. Are you afraid to come without your arms? What do you propose to your people besides war? If you have your own egotistical plans and goals, why should people shed their blood for these personal goals?

We are prepared to consider all issues, including your participation in the coalition government. If you are Afghans, then come and discuss the question of the Government of Afghanistan with Afghans in Afghanistan, not with the representatives of foreign countries. Who besides Afghans, who have undergone the problems, tests, joys, and sorrows of building a new society

can determine its development and future? No one can understand and feel what every Afghan knows—the perception and love of this wretched country, the mourning for its martyred children, and its hopes for the bright future.

We await peace because the right to life is the first and foremost human right, which is to be guaranteed to every Afghan. We need peace so we can safeguard our ancient culture. The proud traditions that were a source of pride for our fathers are to be enriched ever more. In line with these traditions we want to see Afghanistan as a free, neutral, nonaligned, and united state. We want to live in a peaceful friendly atmosphere with our neighbors and all the world's peace-loving people.

Dear compatriots, the Republic of Afghanistan attaches great importance to the issue of the return of refugees, and has from the inception of the Geneva talks. It is making efforts so that Afghan refugees may return to their country in honor and peace. In particular, many decrees have been issued since the declaration of national reconciliation that returning refugees will benefit from. These decrees are still in force.

The returnees will benefit from the decree on 6 months deference from national service; relief from land revenue charges and private businesses, and company taxes and related fines. They will also benefit from the decree stipulating the return of the refugees' real property; from the decree of writing off agricultural bank debts for chemical fertilisers, seeds, and farm machinery; and from other taxes and duties, fines, and state taxes, all of which are waived for returning refugees.

We must tell our refugee compatriots that the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has taken the necessary measures to help them return. For this purpose we have established an office of returnees affairs with a ministerial portfolio. Offices have been opened in various parts of the country to receive refugees. This measure has been taken under the tenet of Afghan brotherhood so returning Afghan refugees may benefit.

It is painful for us, the responsible sons of this country, that a number of our compatriots left like strangers for other countries. This was a result of the hostilities brought about by the bloody situation, caused by the wrongful exploitation of the situation by enemies of the April Revolution.

How harsh and serious it is that brothers stain their hands with each other's blood and the sanctity of brotherhood becomes hostility. Knowing this, from now on we will try hard to use national and international avenues to create broad opportunities for homeless Afghans to return to the fatherland. We are not content with merely signing the Geneva agreements. We are practical people. We stretch our arms wider to all our distant compatriots who left because of the darkness of misunderstanding or the sedition of our enemies.

We are ready for any kind of concession, tolerance and leniency in order to secure national unity and Islamic fraternal relations, to save our people from the torture and fratricide of the war, and to (?comfort) those patriotic Afghans who have been hurt by past bloodshed and woes.

Our compatriots who have lived far away from us in past years and who now want to return as a result of the Geneva accords are reluctant to do so because of the presence of military armed forces in their home border regions. At the same time, the enemy has put out propaganda saying that the traditions and customs of the inhabitants of those regions are being violated by the presence of the armed forces. Thus, the government, in order to allay their worries and concerns, is ready to study the possibility of removing armed forces from those places near the border regions to which they were assigned because of the intervention and aggression from abroad and to halt the passage of weapons convoys.

In return, our compatriots who return to those regions must not allow the opposition armed forces to operate against peace and security from their regions.

The government is ready not only to assist the nationalities, tribes, and inhabitants of the border districts and subdistricts, by appointing subgovernors and governors of subdistricts from among them, but also to extend to them all-round assistance in the form of border militias and tribal units, and to arm them in order to restore their security. Of course, whenever the local forces of these districts require assistance in confronting subversive and antipeace groups, the government will dispatch units and companies to these regions to assist in the restoration of security. I think that this possibility must be an encouraging example of decision making for all our refugee forces and a bright example of our goodwill and fraternal feelings.

Today all the world looks to Afghanistan. We were the first people to take this historic step which is not only necessary for us but for all people on the planet earth. The world's public has seen the fruits of the policy of national reconciliation. Peace in Afghanistan is the formidable part the people of Afghanistan play in the cause for world peace. Therefore, we have undertaken a major high responsibility in the destiny of peace in the whole world. The people of Afghanistan were not alone in their struggle: the formidable and disinterested assistance of our friend and ally, the people of the Soviet Union, whose sons together with our sons, defended our beloved Afghanistan—will remain forever in the minds of our people.

Our great friend, together with our people, has tolerated all issues and bitter sacrifices, in order to extend assistance for the defense of our revolution. The Geneva accords guarantee the sovereignty of Afghanistan. Therefore, the friendly forces will soon return to their country. This decision is an agreement [word indistinct] between

the Government of Afghanistan and the USSR. We have long said that when danger to the sovereignty of Afghanistan was removed, the Soviet forces would return to their homeland. Now all the world's public can believe that the Soviet Union came to Afghanistan for its assistance. Now we are fulfilling our promise.

We convey our heart-felt gratitude to His Excellency Perez de Cuellar, the UN secretary general, and to Mr Diego Cordovez, his special envoy. The role and credibility of the UN secretary general and his disinterested and peace-creating efforts were outstanding in bringing this great and joyous day near. I am fully confident that the United Nations will assist the Republic Afghanistan by designing a broad program of assistance for the reconstruction of Afghanistan through various UN organizations. We are waiting for the special UN representative for economic assistance to the Republic of Afghanistan. We also have reason to express our gratitude to the U.S. Administration.

Let today be a day of peace and the first day in the new history of our relations with Pakistan. Our hopes, desires, and efforts are obvious to the whole world. We want to live in peace and friendship with everybody. However, our most sincere desire is to live in a friendly atmosphere with our neighbors. Let the invitation from Kabul, the capital of our ancient Islamic country, be heard by our neighbors, the Islamic countries of Iran and Pakistan.

Afghan-Indian friendship has strong foundations and will continue to grow in the future, too, thus becoming deeper and more consolidated. We want good and mutually advantageous relations with the PRC, as a socialist country. We are seriously interested in improving our relations and expanding our ties with all Islamic Arab and Gulf countries, and with all the countries of the world, including socialist and capitalist countries.

We Afghans, having perceived the values of war and peace, invite our neighbors to shake the hand we extend to them. The whole world sees these hands open. There is no stone or weapon in them.

We hope that the people and countries of the world perceive our efforts. Their support now, when the role of peace has blossomed in the Afghan land, is very important. On behalf of the Afghan people we invite everyone to safeguard the rose of peace and to defend it. The world public must know and should remember that peace in Afghanistan means peace for everyone. May peace be eternal in Afghanistan and may the sky always be blue.

Najibullah Messages to Leaders on Geneva Accords

Cables Soviet Leadership

LD152310 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari
1600 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] The following message has been sent to the Soviet leadership on the eve of the signing of the Geneva agreements by Esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, and Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand, prime minister of Afghanistan:

Mikhail S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee; Andrey Gromyko, president of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium; Nikolay Ivanovich Ryzhkov, chairman of the Council of Ministers; dear comrades,

On behalf of the people of Afghanistan we congratulate you and through the CPSU Central Committee the USSR [words indistinct], the Soviet Government and all Soviet people on the signing of the Geneva agreement on Afghanistan. We are deeply grateful to you for your broad initiatives regarding the solution to a very difficult and problematic issue and for your internationalist assistance.

The signing of the Geneva agreements on Afghanistan and the role which the Soviet Union played in untying the knot around Afghanistan will undoubtedly be registered in the history of Afghan-Soviet relations, which were headed by the great Lenin and Amanullah Khan, the great son of Afghanistan.

The success of the Geneva talks proved to be an eternal and dialectical example of the new political thinking. It has proved to the world that problems and disputes can and must be solved only through peaceful means, with political courage, realism, rationality, renewed determiniton, and a feeling of responsibility toward progress, peace, and security on the face of the earth.

During these great days for our countries, the people of Afghanistan are making preparations with profound gratefulness and cordial respect to achieve its obligation of seeing off the Soviet internationalist soldiers who have heroically carried out their mission of defending and saving the independence and territorial integrity of the state of Afghanistan. The grateful people of Afghanistan and its present and future generation will remember the bravery of the Soviet soldier as a manifestation of the real and selfless friendship of our good neighbor, the great Soviet Union.

I assure you that the people of Afghanistan, who have taken great steps toward the solution of regional disputes, will carry on with the cause of national reconciliation until its total success is ensured. They will consolidate the beloved peace in their country. They will ensure all conditions for a united, independent, neutral, nonaligned country which will be a friend with all the neighboring countries of Afghanistan and will play their role in the international cause of peace and improving the international situation.

We will not refrain from any efforts to develop friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union. We wish you, dear comrades and all Soviet people, new great successes in your struggle to restructure, in alleviating the danger of atomic disaster, and for the durability of the human race. Long and eternal life to Soviet-Afghan

friendship. In the interest of our people and all people of the world, good and all-round cooperation and friendship and good-neighbourly relations between our countries.

[Signed] Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee

Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand, prime minister of the Republic of Afghanistan

Thanks President Reagan

LD160913 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0430 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 15 BAKHTAR—The successful conclusion of Geneva talks on Afghanistan and the signing of the pertinent documents were received with satisfaction and great hope by the people of Afghanistan and the world over, reads a message sent by Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan, to Ronald Reagan, the U.S. President on the occasion of the successful conclusion of Geneva talks.

These accords provide favourable grounds for the political solution of the problems inside and around Afghanistan and that for the safeguarding and growth of Afghanistan as an independent, neutral and non-aligned state, adds the message.

"The people and Government of the Republic of Afghanistan are thankful of you, Mr President, for your noble role and for that your great country acts as a guarantor of the accords reached in Geneva", reads the message.

The Republic of Afghanistan is prepared to cooperate with all the countries of the world including the United States based on equal rights, mutual benefits and noninterference in the internal affairs of each other.

Cables UN's Perez de Cuellar

LD160915 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0421 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 15, BAKHTAR—Najibullah, president of the Republic Of Afghanistan, in a message sent to Perez de Cuellar, UN secretary general, has described the successful conclusion of Geneva talks extremely significant. The accords signed have opened new horizons for ceasing fratricidal war in Afghanistan and helping to improve political atmosphere in the region and the world over.

The people and Government of the Republic of Afghanistan, reads the message, highly evaluate your role as UN secretary general and your special envoy Mr. Cordovez in the political solution of the situation around Afghanistan and thanking you for your peaceful efforts. The people and Government of Afghanistan, points out the message, will be making every effort for the cause of peace in Afghanistan and all over the world.

National Front Issues Message on Geneva Accords

LD170643 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0438 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 16, BAKHTAR—"At present we are on the threshold of the particular moments of the history of our country and revolution", says the message of National Front of the Republic of Afghanistan addressed to the Afghans on Friday.

Fortunately, sound mind, mutual understanding and political realism resulted to the signing of the Geneva talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan, the message adds.

The National Front of the Republic of Afghanistan considers the signing of the Geneva talks as the biggest gains of the policy of national reconciliation and new political thinking and attaches high value to it in relation to the solution of situation around Afghanistan and consolidation of peace in the region and in the world at large, the message goes on.

"We welcome the goodwill, bravery and political realism of the concerned sides in the Geneva talks. The statements of Afghan and Soviet leaders of February 8 provided final ground for taking decision in the talks. We appreciate the roles played by the concerned sides in the Geneva accords and attach high value for the good-offices of the secretary general of the UN and his special representative Diego Cordovez here. The guarantee of the accords by the two great powers, that is, the Soviet Union and United States is a source of trust to us", the message adds.

The National Front of the Republic of Afghanistan stretches its profound gratitudes to the friendly people of the Soviet Union for its internationalist assistance to the Afghan people rendered in their hard days. The Afghans will have these assistance in their memories for ever. They are hopeful that the Soviet Union and other states in the region and in the world render their assistance for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. The future assistance of world community to Afghanistan will help Afghans to heal the deep wounds caused as a result of the undeclared war against Afghanistan, the message stresses.

Now, it is up to Afghans to stretch their brotherly and friendly hands to each other and take constructive role for the rehabilitation of their country. Afghans should not allow anyone to further impose war, arson and murder in the country, the message says.

The April 14, the day of the signing of the Geneva accords is a historical and unforgettable day. The National Front of the Republic of Afghanistan proposes to the Presidency of the Republic of Afghanistan to

declare this day as "national peace day", the message points out. Let the sun of peace further strengthen the bulk tree [as received] of national reconciliation. Let instead of gun-fires the roar of harvesters and voices of factories be heard, the message notes.

Wakil Holds News Conference on Geneva Accords

LD160859 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0442 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Geneva, April 15, BAKHTAR—'Abdul Wakil, minister of foreign affairs of Afghanistan, participated in a press conference in Geneva after the signing of Geneva accords and replied to the questions of journalists.

Before replying to journalists questions, he said that the signing of Geneva accords between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is the first successful tast of new diplomacy at the world level for removing regional conflicts through political talks.

If the provisions of the accords are implemented not only peace will be secured but it will also help in expediting the process of national compromise and the formation of a coalition government, said 'Abdul Wakil.

The Afghan foreign minister pointed out that the documents of Geneva accords in fact are covering a comprehensive political solution of the issues which are mainly aimed at ceasing intervention into the internal affairs of Afghanistan from abroad. The both countries have undertaken specific commitments such as paying respect to each other's sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity and the right to determine its own political system. In conformity with the signed accords, the both countries are to refrain from overt and covert sabotage, violation of political and economic stability and the organisation of such adverse activities in their soils.

The United States has given firm guarantees as a guarantor for the cessation of intervention and its non-resumption. The Geneva document is not merely a document for the return of the limited military contingents of the Soviet Union but it is a collection of principles and commitments for the solution of the problems pertaining to the external aspects of the situation around Afghanistan and first and foremost cessation of intervention and guarantee for its non-repetition.

We are expecting all the sides involved to execute with goodwill and honesty what they have signed for. Other countries not involved in the process are also expected to pay respect to it. Iran is the focus of our attention as it had earlier promised to Mr. Cordovez that as soon as accords are reached between Afghanistan and Pakistan, Iran will also join the process. We are now expecting Iran to abide by its commitment.

'Abdul Wakil, on behalf of the people and government of Afghanistan, thanked the UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar and his special envoy, Diego Cordovez, for their patient role played by them in the process.

The Afghan foreign minister called on journalists to direct the public minds towards the creation of understanding and confidence.

Further on News Conference

LD160908 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0515 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 14, BAKHTAR—'Abdul Wakil, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan, who is heading the Afghan delegation answered the questions raised by local journalists via telephone.

Replying a question, he said, from the very beginning the process of Geneva talks which ended by signing of Geneva accords, started as a result of endeavours made by the UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar who once was the UN under secretary general, then his special envoy undertook the responsibility.

He described the presence of Perez de Cuellar during the signing ceremoney imperative. Moreover, his presence was as politically significant for international prestige he has. It strenghtens the executive force of accords as well.

The success of Geneva talks is not only appreciable for us but all peoples of the world who are interested in political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan also appreciate it.

'Abdul Wakil described the presence of the USSR and the U.S. foreign ministers at the ceremony and the signing of declaration on international guarantees politically significant. He hoped they as guarantors, could help the accords be translated into practice. Thus, their presence and signature in the relating documents was one of the main issues of Geneva talks which itself shows the political importance of their presence.

Regarding the realisation of accords signed, 'Abdul Wakil said according to bilateral agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan, both countries are obliged to implement the provisions of the agreement.

It is enshrined in the Geneva accords that two 20-member teams of the UN militarymen will be stationed in Kabul and in Islamabad. The teams are duty-bound to keep eye on any violation and breach of the accords.

The teams of militarymen will be stationed in Kabul and Islamabad in case of violating the provisions of agreement, will assess the complaint if one of the parties of agreement does not observe the provisions they will be controlled by the UN teams. [sentence as received]

"As for our side concerned we will cooperate sincerely and honestly in implementing the accords with the UN as we did in regard to the signing of the Geneva accords.

A great deal of work [has been] done and violation should not occur. The intention for signing was to halt violation, interference, and the Afghan people's aspiration which is the establishment of peace and normalcy come true.

BAKHTAR Comments on Geneva Accords Signing
LD160919 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0448 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 14, BAKHTAR—Undoubtedly, the success in the Geneva talks was not achieved simply. The persistent diplomatic efforts of the Republic of Afghanistan, the policy of national reconciliation as a manifestation of the new political thinking, the noble endeavours by the UN secretary general and his special envoy, the flexibility and goodwill shown by the Soviet Union and all sides concerned played a key role in this process.

The significance of the agreement in Geneva which puts an end to one of the most complicated regional conflicts lies in the fact that it will cease the foreign interference in the affairs of the country on one hand and provides the better conditions for the acceleration of the process of reaching a national accord among the all warring forces in the country on the other.

Political observers are in conviction that the signing of Geneva agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and Pakistan on political solution of the situation around Afghanistan is one of the gains of the foreign aspects of the policy of national reconciliation in Afghanistan which gave new impetus to the process of the talks during more than one year and provided the grounds for the final political solution of the situation around Afghanistan.

The February 8th statements by the leaders of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union and April 7th joint Afghan-Soviet statement are the best examples of goodwill and political determination showed by the two countries for political settlement of situation around Afghanistan and success of the Geneva talks.

The Soviet Union and the United Nations are supporting the policy of national reconciliation which ensures formation of a coalition government and invites various forces in Afghan society for peace and cessation of war in the country. [sentence as received] Afghanistan as an independent, non-aligned country, the territory of which will never be used for hostile purposes against its neighbouring countries, has expressed its commitments for strict realisation and observation of the Geneva accords and expects the other sides concerned such [as received] firmness and goodwill.

The signing of Geneva peace agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and Pakistan is one of the great political event in settlement of regional conflicts in Asia and world over and heralds peace and security in the Afghan land.

Wakil Holds Talks With Shevardnadze in Moscow
LD172112 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] On his way home 'Abdul Wakil, member of the PDPA Central Committee Political Bureau and foreign minister of Afghanistan, stopped over in Moscow. On 16 April he met with Eduard Shevardnadze, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and foreign minister of the USSR.

During the meeting the interlocuters highly assessed the signing of the Geneva accords, which have created a legal foundation for stopping all external interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and suitable conditions for solving the situation around Afghanistan and for the growth of the national reconciliation process in the Republic of Afghanistan.

The foreign ministers of both countries pointed with pleasure to the statement of M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, concerning the fact that the Geneva accords and their international results are no less important than the treaty concerning the medium and short range missiles.

The agreements were met with complete satisfaction by those Afghans who believe that they prepare the ground for peace in Afghanistan. It was pointed out in this regard that the irresponsible statements by some political figures, who are trying to belittle the importance of the Geneva accords, are futile. These personalities in fact are joining the voice of the representatives of those extremist groups, who are opposed to the Geneva accords.

At the meeting Afghan Foreign Minister 'Abdul Wakil emphasized that the Government of Republic of Afghanistan intends to seriously observe the obligations which it undertook in the Geneva accords and expressed the hope that the opposition's approach too will be the same.

Both sides pointed out that the Geneva accords are the first specific results of the principles of the new political thinking in solving regional disputes and enhancing the credibility of the Republic of Afghanistan in the international arena.

In light of the Afghan and Soviet leaders' joint communique in Tashkent concerning the prospects for the growth of relations and cooperation in various areas, they exchanged views on these issues. The Soviet side reaffirmed its readiness to consolidate and expand the all-round cooperation with Afghanistan, including the

economic rehabilitation and provision of suitable conditions for the return of Afghan refugees, who are residing temporarily in Pakistan, Iran and other countries. In this regard both sides pointed to the necessity for broad international cooperation in economic and social development in Afghanistan and healing the wounds created by several years of war.

At this meeting, which was held in a sincere working atmosphere, both sides discussed other topics of mutual interest, including international topics.

Najibullah Message to Opposition Commanders

LD152145 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] Esteemed Najibullah has issued the following message on the eve of the successful accomplishment of elections to the National Assembly and the signing of the Geneva agreements to the leaders of the seven party alliance and the commanders of the armed opposition groups:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Leaders of the opposition alliance and the commanders of the opposition armed groups. Sometime ago I addressed you with regard to the start of elections to the National Assembly. I wish to inform you that, in accordance with the election law, as a result of the National Assembly election which took place from 4 to 14 April 1988, 234 representatives and 128 senators have been elected.

Previous opponents are also included. Members of all strata of our country have taken part in the elections. Some 1.5 million people have voted for their representatives, candidates for the seats of representatives and senators to the National Assembly. This is a clear manifestation of the people's confidence and a clear reflection of their demands and opinions. It is another step toward the cessation of war and fratricide, the deepening of political dialogue for the maintenance of peace, expansion of democracy, and the establishment of a coalition among those friends who presently confront one another and the forces which represent the society of Afghanistan.

It is symbolic that the last obstacles in the way of signing agreements in Geneva were removed and they were consequently signed on 14 April. The leaders of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union submitted constructive proposals during their meeting in Tashkent and once again expressed their readiness to consolidate peace in Afghanistan. All our activities are carried out under the symbol of national reconciliation. Grasping hands are drawn in this symbol. These are the hands of friendship. This is a manifestation of our will for peace. The whole world is beginning to believe this.

Today I repeat my proposals to allow the main opposition organizations to open their offices and to start their press activities, provided that they comply with the idea of compromise for ensuring peace and security. We are ready to cooperate in the interest of defending the fruits of national reconciliation, with those who still make efforts to fight against this noble policy. I reiterate our readiness to meet with the leaders of the opposition groups in order to reach expedient decisions with regard to peace and tranquility and prosperity for the wretched people of Afghanistan and for the future of our children.

We are waiting for the introduction of your candidates to the Council of Representatives [Wolasi Jirgah] and the Senate. In accordance with the Constitution and the election law, your senators will be appointed by the president. I once again propose to you to assess objectively our activities program for implementing the national reconciliation policy, a practical step taken recently in connection with the solution to the problem of Afghanistan, in Afghanistan, in Geneva, in Tashkent, and in whole world. Let each one of us contemplate whether he has accomplished his national and Islamic obligation, and whether he has carried out everything for the maintenance of peace in his country, Afghanistan. In the name of our beloved country, Afghanistan, we call on all Afghanistan for peace.

Success is from God.

[Signed] Najibullah, president of Afghanistan

Sharq Discloses Western Aid Appeal for Refugees

OW181129 Tokyo KYODO in English 1117 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 17 KYODO—Afghanistan will make an appeal for restoration of aid from Japan and Western countries to deal with an anticipated influx of returning refugees from neighboring Pakistan and Iran, a high-level Afghan official said Sunday.

In an exclusive interview with KYODO news service, Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Hasan Sharq said that following the Geneva peace accords last week, his government expects a million refugees will return to their homeland during the next year, and another two million over the following two years.

The deputy premier who also heads a government task force on the refugee problem, said his country would not be able to handle without it outside help the 800 million dollars in assistance he estimated would be needed to care for the returnees for a six-month period. "The return of upwards of several million refugees from outside our borders is the most pressing task facing the rebuilding of the nation," he emphasized.

He said the government was concerned about the prospect of a sudden convergence on the capital and that in order to convince people to return to where they originated, funds are necessary to transport them there and to repair their damaged dwellings. As to where the funds would come from if not from outside, the deputy premier said he had "no idea." Japan and Britain have already announced aid packages of 5 million dollars and 10 million pounds respectively.

Pakistan To Allow 'Freedom Fighters' To Stay

BK161204 Hong Kong AFP in English 1147 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Islamabad, April 16 (AFP)—Pakistan said Saturday that Afghan rebels will be allowed to stay in the country and added that it will still press for the establishment of an acceptable interim government in Afghanistan.

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Zain Noorani told reporters here Saturday that he had informed the United Nations that Pakistan would not recognize the current pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. He added that Pakistan and the United States believed that Afghan President Najibullah's claim that his army controlled 20 per cent of the country was "doubtful."

Mr. Noorani was one of the signatories of Thursday's Geneva agreement on Afghanistan—signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan with the United States and the Soviet Union acting as guarantors—for the withdrawal of some 115,000 Soviet troops from Afghanistan within nine months.

"It is a mistaken notion that Pakistan has given any understandfing that freedom fighters will not be allowed to stay in Pakistan," Mr. Noorani said.

"Mujahidin are not mercenaries, nor are they terrorists. They are freedom fighters and part and parcel of Afghanistan," he said, adding that "it will be a mockery of the term if they are called a group."

The foreign minister added that the resistance guerrillas controlled 80 per cent of their territory.

Mr. Noorani said he was confident that the question of forming a broad-based government to replace Mr. Najibullah's regime would be resolved by the United Nations mediator Diego Cordovez in a matter of months.

He said the signatories to the peace accord realised the necessity of an interim government for restoring peace and creating a conducive atmosphere for the return of three million refugees from Pakistan.

Mr. Noorani said Pakistan would honour its obligations undertaken in the Geneva accord, but he did not reject the possibility of U.S. arms deliveries to the mujahidin if the Soviet Union continued to assist Mr. Najibullah's regime.

"Now if for some strange reasons of its own, the Soviet Union decides to keep on supplying arms to the PDPA (Afghan Communist Party) or the Najibullah regime, why do you grudge the freedom fighters' same right to get arms from somewhere else?" he said. He said the Pakistan Government believed that the days of the Najibullah regime were numbered.

Meanwhile, the seven-party resistance alliance Saturday denounced the Geneva accord as "oppressive and unjust" at a rally in the northwest Pakistan city of Peshawar. "The Geneva accord tramples the United Nations Charter calling for the right of self-determination and also violates the world body's repeated resolutions envisaging assessment of the refugees views on a durable peace," the alliance said in a statement released to the press.

"Let the Russians make all-out efforts to quislings and prolong their survival by shipping large quantities of armoury. Allah willing, the bulk of the hardware will end up in the hands of the mujahidin and the communist regime will be overthrown," it said.

The Afghan resistance chief Gulbuddin Hikmatyar in an interview with the THE MUSLIM newspaper vowed to intensify the armed struggle inside Afghanistan until the Soviet-backed Kabul regime was toppled.

Rebels Capture Army Garrison in Zabol Province

BK171340 Hong Kong AFP in English 1336 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Islamabad, April 17 (AFP)—Afghan guerrillas captured an Afghan army garrison in southeastern Zabol Province after several days of fighting Saturday, rebel sources in Peshawar said Sunday. A total of 10 officers were killed and 20 troops injured, while another 50 were captured, the sources said. Afghan guerrillas estimated their casualties at 10 "martyred" (killed) and 18 wounded, they added.

The mujahidin gained full control of the army garrison in Darwazahgey and seized army weapons and supplies, the sources said. The rebels, who were not party to the Geneva peace accord signed Thursday between Pakistan and Afghanistan on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, have vowed to continue their "Jihad", or holy war, against the Soviet-backed Kabul government.

Najibullah's Ramadan Message to Islamic Leaders

LD171855 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] The following message has been sent from Esteemed Najibullah, the president of Afghanistan, addressed to leaders of a number of Islamic countries on the arrival of the sacred month of Ramadan:

In the name God, the merciful, the compassionate. Esteemed Excellency, on behalf of the Muslim people of the Republic of Afghanistan and on behalf of myself, I congratulate you on the occasion of the auspicious month of Ramadan, a month which will be observed once again by faithful Muslims of the world.

The Muslim people of Afghanistan are confident that with the help of almighty God and with the blessing of this auspicious month, the worthy cause of national reconciliation—which is in complete accord with the will of almighty God and the demands of all Muslims and the humanity—the cessation of war and bloodshed, and the killing of Muslims by Muslims, as well as the creation of an atmosphere of peace in our homeland, will succeed. I hope that the unity of the world of Islam will be strengthened during Ramadan, and that peace, stability, and security in our country and the world of Islam will be maintained.

The Geneva accords—which are the manifestation of the will of the Afghan people and the Republic of Afghanistan and their principled compromises and flexibility concerning the peaceful solution of the situation around Afghanistan and the realization of the policy of national reconciliation in the Republic of Afghanistan—contain a hopeful message to welcome the arrival of the auspicious month of Ramadan. This message helps comfort the hearts of the Muslim people of Afghanistan and other Muslims of the world who are observing Ramadan.

I assure you, Muslim brothers, that the Republic of Afghanistan, as it has sincerely worked toward the success of the Geneva accords, will also act sincerely in implementing the Geneva accords. On this auspicious occasion I wish all our Muslim brothers in all Islamic countries to be blessed with peace, prosperity, and progress. I wish your excellencies the best of health and further successes. And the successes are from God.

[Signed] Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan

Vote Counting for National Assembly Begins

LD170645 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0427 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Kabul, April 16, BAKHTAR—The election commissions of the polling stations started counting votes to the candidates to the House of Representatives and the Senate on Thursday evening. Based on the law of elections the election commissions of the polling stations are assigned to present in twenty-four hours results of the voting to the election commissions of the constituency. The process is continuing and the results will be announced after passing the legal stages.

Bangladesh

President Dissolves Jatiya Party Student Front

BK171607 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Excerpts] President Ershad has called for making the best use of prevailing social peace and stability through initiating greater development efforts to upgrade the quality of life. He was addressing the fourth grand national conference of the primary teachers associations in Dhaka today. [passage omitted]

Referring to his government's program of literacy for all by the year 2000, President Ershad emphasized the need for restoring congenial academic atmosphere in educational institutions to reach this goal. For successful implementation of the literacy program, the president said that anarchy in the premises and examination halls and movements for postponement of examinations have to be stopped forthwith. Besides, party politics from educational institutions should be stopped once for all. The president made it clear that he is against not students politics, but he is against party politics by students. Keeping this in view he has dissolved the students front of the Jatiya Party and expressed the hope that others would follow suit. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister on Geneva Peace Accords

BK161258 Dhaka Overseas Service in English 1230 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Bangladesh has welcomed the signing of the peace accords in Geneva on the Afghan crisis and hoped that these would be implemented in letter and spirit.

Foreign Minister Humayun Rashid Chowdhury said in Dhaka on Saturday [16 April] that Bangladesh has always been in favor of a negotiated settlement of the problem based on United Nations, the Nonaligned Movement, and the Islamic Conference resolutions.

He expressed the hope that the implementation of the instruments would promote congenial condition in Afghanistan so that millions of refugees would return to their homeland in peace and dignity.

Mr Chowdhury, who was the president of the 41st session of the UN General Assembly, said the signing of the accords once again proved how effective a role the United Nations could play in resolving complex and difficult situation through the dedicated and patient efforts.

The foreign minister lauded the wisdom, sagacity, and foresightedness, and the leadership of the United States, the Soviet Union, and Pakistan that made the signing of the instruments possible.

5 Killed During Local Council Repolling

BK180912 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] In Bangladesh, the leader of the Awami League and the 8-party alliance, Sheikh Hasina, has called upon the people to resist the government's attempt to use religion as a political weapon. She said action should be taken during the Ramadan month to desist such moves. Sheikh Hasina said a movement will be launched during this period against the Ershad government.

Meanwhile, 5 persons were killed and more than 150 injured in clashes during repolling for local council elections at different centers. Supporters of rival candidates used firearms and bombs. It may be recalled that at least 400 people were killed and several thousand injured in violence during local council elections in February.

272 Political Prisoners Ordered Released

BK171558 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] The government has ordered the release of 272 detenues [detainees] held under various political reasons. This was announced by the Ministry of Home Affairs in Dhaka today.

India

Gandhi Comments on Vietnam, Japan Talks

BK170458 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] India is to step up economic assistance to Vietnam. The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, told the general secretary of the Vietnamese Communist Party in Ho Chi Minh City that India will increase its efforts to rebuild the war-ravaged economy. It will reschedule its loans already advanced.

At their talks lasting more than 4 hours yesterday, the two leaders reviewed the international situation, Cambodia, and other regional problems and bilateral matters. Both the countries shared the same perception on Cambodia and felt that the best solution lies in the bilateral talks between Prince Norodom Sihanouk and the Heng Samrin government. Vietnam has appreciated India's efforts in this regard.

Talking to newsmen aboard the Air India plane while on his way back home, the prime minister said it is difficult to anticipate the Chinese reaction as the talks on Cambodia are now at an early stage.

Asked about a cease-fire by the IPKF in Sri Lanka, the prime minister said this is entirely up to the peacekeeping force. He reiterated that the IPKF will withdraw from Sri Lanka once its task is accomplished.

On the Punjab situation, Mr Gandhi said that the new Akal Takht [highest seat of Sikh religion] chief needs more time, and no hasty conclusions should be drawn over his actions. The prime minister said that during his talks with the Japanese and Vietnamese leaders, he had impressed upon them the seriousness of Pakistan's support to terrorists in Punjab and its encouragement to narcotics trade; they were not aware of this and now have a better appreciation. Along with action to check terrorism, the government has initiated a number of measures to control the trafficking in narcotics. He said the continued flow of arms aid to Pakistan after the Afghan accord is against the clear understanding India had at the highest level with the United States. He told a questioner that there is commonality of views on many areas between India and Japan, though there are different viewpoints in others like the Nonproliferation Treaty.

Our correspondent says that one of the last engagements of the prime minister during his brief stay in Vietnam was an interview to the state television. Mr Gandhi said a strong base for the Indo-Vietnamese friendship was laid by Jawahar Lal Nehru and Ho Chi Minh; this will be further strengthened. Both in the interview and at the banquet hosted in his honor, the prime minister spoke highly of the heroism and fortitude of the Vietnamese and said nothing is more precious than freedom.

The prime minister has since returned to New Delhi. Speaking to newsmen at Delhi airport, Mr Gandhi reiterated that there is no question of any mid-term poll.

Views U.S. Aid to Pakistan

BK170934 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Excerpts] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, said America's arms aid to Pakistan after the Afghan accord is against the clear understanding New Delhi had at the highest level with Washington. He was speaking to newsmen on board the special plane on his way back home after a 3-day visit to Japan and Vietnam.

In reply to a question, the prime minister said the nuclear program of Islamabad seems to have created doubts in the Reagan administration. He said that this is the reason for Washington refraining from making comments on tht level of uranium enrichment achieved by Islamabad. [passage omitted]

On economic cooperation with Japan, Mr Gandhi said he had received a positive response for investment during his talks in Tokyo with the prime minister, Mr Takeshita. He pointed out that modalities are to be worked out for speedy processing of Japanese investment proposals.

Talking to newsmen in Delhi airport on his arrival early this morning, the prime minister said the major project considered during his talks in Tokyo on economic cooperation was help in modernizing the iron and steel company at Burnpur in West Bengal. The Japanese have agreed to continue aiding the program.

Mr Gandhi said that on the Kampuchean issue both India and Vietnam shared the same perception and are working for a solution. The two countries think the best solution lies in talks with Prince Sihanouk.

In reply to a query, the prime minister reiterated that there is no question of a mid-term poll.

Missile-Equipped Frigate Joins Navy 16 Apr

BK160904 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] The Godavari class frigate "INS [Indian Navy Ship] Gomati" has been inducted into the Indian Navy.

The frigate, equipped with long-range surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles, was commissioned into the Navy at the naval dockyard in Bombay this morning by the defense minister, Mr K.C. Pant.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister pointed out that the responsibility of the Indian Navy was not only to guard the long coastline of the country, but also to safeguard legitimate economic and maritime interests in the exclusive economic zone.

He said the growing naval fleet is a symbol of our determination to create a strong and capable force that can effectively meet the maritime commitments of the country. He expressed concern at the increasing movement of naval ships belonging to countries outside the region in the Indian Ocean area. He called upon the countries of the region to shoulder maritime responsibility to a greater extent in order to convert the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace.

Defense Minister on Pakistan, PRC Naval Capability

BK170548 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] The defense minister, Mr K.C. Pant, has expressed concern over external threats to the country's legitimate rights to use its seas for economic purposes like sea-borne trade, fishing, and mining. Commissioning the Indian naval air squadron base at INS [Indian Naval Ship] "Hansa" in Dabolim near Panaji yesterday, Mr Pant said that our Navy should be an open ocean force, capable of safeguarding security and other interests. The squadron base at Dabolim has become operational with the induction of five TU-142 long-range antisubmarine warfare and maritime reconnaissance aircraft. The chief of the naval staff and the governor and the chief minister of Goa attended the function.

The defense minister said the naval capability of Pakistan and China in the region has grown rapidly. He referred to Pakistan's long-range Atlantic aircraft, fitted with air-to-surface missiles, which pose a threat to vast areas of the north Arabian Sea.

9 Terrorists Arrested; 1 Killed in Encounter

BK151644 Delhi Doordashan Television Network in English1600 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] In Faridkot District, Punjab police arrested nine terrorists after a brief encounter. The arrests were made at a village under Bagapurana police station near Moga. The arrested terrorists are said to have been involved in a number of crimes in Faridkot and Ferozepore Districts. An unidentified terrorist was shot dead in an encounter in Majitha area last night.

In another encounter a CRPF [Center Reserve Police Force] jawan [soldier] was seriously injured in Amritsar District.

Iran

Reportage on U.S. Attacks on Oil Platforms

Nasir, Salman Platforms Hit

LD180658 Tehran IRNA in English 0656 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 18, IRNA—The U.S. naval forces attacked two Iranian oil platforms of Nasr and Salman in the Persian Gulf Monday morning. The two platforms are reportedly under the fire of the aggressive U.S. warships and helicopters. The first attack was launched against the operating Nasr oil platform at 09:00 hours local time (05:30 GMT) and the nearby Salman platform was hit 23 minutes later. Nasr platform in Siri Island has a daily production of about 38,000 barrels of oil. The Salman platform, a joint Iran-Oman oil field, had been previously subjected to Iraqi attacks several times.

The aggressive U.S. attack came after Washington accused Iran of being behind the mine explosion which damaged the destroyer "USS Samuel Roberts" in the Persian Gulf waters last week. Iran denied the charges and warned the U.S. Administration against any military aggression against the Islamic Republic.

U.S.-Owned Platform Attacked

NC181052 Paris AFP in English 1049 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Manama, April 18 (AFP)—An Iranian ship attacked an oil platform used by a U.S. company in the southern Gulf on Monday afternoon, maritime sources in the region reported. They said the platforms storage tank had been seriously damaged and was on fire. The attack at 12:15 a.m. (0915 GMT) came only four hours after six U.S. warships shelled Iranian offshore platforms in the southern Gulf. The platform attacked by Iran is in

the Mubarak off-shore field, which belongs to the Gulf Arab emirate of Al-Shariqah, but is close to the island of Abu Musa, which has been occupied by Iran since 1971.

PA: UK Barge Under Attack

LD181209 London PRESS ASSOCIATION in English 1254 GMT 18 Apr 88

[By PA defense correspondent Charles Miller]

[Text] A British oil barge came under attack in the Gulf today hours after American warships attacked Iranian oil platforms. Top-level meetings involving Royal Navy chiefs were held immediately to discuss Britain's response. The British-flagged oil barge "York Marine" was attacked by an Iranian ship in the Mubarak oilfield in the southern Gulf off the Iranian island of Abu Musa. No details were immediately available.

A few hours earlier six American warships attacked two Iranian oil rigs in retaliation for a mine blast last week which damaged an American frigate, injuring 10 sailors. The United States informed Britain before the attack. Mrs Thatcher said: "We are satisfied from the evidence we have that the mines were laid by Iran and that the U.S. reaction was entirely justified as a proportionate response."

Government Issues Statement

LD181115 Tehran IRNA in English 1110 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 18, IRNA—In a statement here Monday the Iranian Government said that Washington and Baghdad have conspired against Iran but that their conspiracy will simply prompt Iranians to "demonstrate their power" to their enemies. The statement said no matter how far the U.S. would be willing to go for saving Saddam Husayn, it will not be able to save him from his doomed fate. The statement issued shortly after a U.S. attack Monday on two Iranian oil platforms at the Persian Gulf described the attack as an empty bravado and "a weak ballyhoo which will not go unanswered." It said Saddam Husayn's fall is so near at hand that "the Great Satan" is now willing to go through fire and water in order to keep him in power.

The Iranian Government communique reminded the masses that the U.S. threat at the advent of the holy month of Ramadan occasions a firm response by all sectors of the Iranian society who are concerned "about the safety of innocent children, women and old men" throughout the country, and repeated Imam Khomeyni's often quoted observation at the outbreak of the war that "the Iranians will hold out even though their fighting in a war of resistance should last for twenty years."

Further on Statement

LD181206 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Following the U.S. attack on three Iranian oil platforms, the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran issued a statement. We draw your attention to the statement. In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The month of Ramadan has begun, so once again we can witness the steadfastness and the greatest victories of the Iranian nation. The reply to repeated stupidities of the Great Satan, the crushing of the aggressions of the defeated enemy, and the most glorious manifestation of the resolve of the Iranian people.

This morning, in a dastardly act of aggression, the Great Satan surrounded our oil platforms and fired on them. There is no honor in taking revenge on defenseless oil platforms. It cannot make up for repeated U.S. defeats at the hands of the Islamic Revolution of Iran. No miracle can save Saddam from our powerful hands. No hue and cry can drive back this revolution. The United States has made a mistake. From its lofty stature Islamic Iran stands against them both, will bring them to their knees, and give them the bitter taste of defeat.

Such screams will not be unanswered. Such fireplay—concocted as a joint scheme of the United States and the Zionist regime of Iraq, and taking place simultaneously with Iraq's feeble attempts on the Al-Faw front—merely serves as a loud call to our nation to prepare. The destruction of the Saddam regime is so close that the Great Satan has gone crazy and is trying to save it. It is a call to the Iranian nation to get ready. It is time for the enemy to draw his last breath. Followers of Imam Husayn, it is now Ramadan, a time to demonstrate the strength of your faith, and to display the most fierce storm coming from your clenched fists. It is a month for those who care about the security of innocent children to rush to the battlefronts, a month for drowning U.S. support for Iraq in the Persian Gulf, and a month for avenging defenseless women, old men, and children from unbridled blasphemy.

Followers of Imam Husayn, all blasphemy is lined up before the pious. The spirit of freedom and integrity is boiling and calls us all to a great mobilization. The Islamic Republic will perform its revolutionary duty alongside the mobilized Iranian nation. No action by the United States can save Saddam from doom. To establish long-standing and just peace in the region we are determined to continue this resistance, even if it takes 20 years.

Commentary on U.S. 'Aggression'

LD181307 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1111 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The U.S. Administration, after several years of direct and indirect support for the regime ruling Iraq, in

the course of a blatant act of aggression and in the framework of the triangular alliance of the United States, Iraq, and regional reactionaries, gave new dimensions to its attack against the Islamic Revolution and directly entered the war in favor of Iraq against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Since yesterday, the Iraqi regime's forces, with U.S. helicopter support and by using Bubiyan Island, which is controlled by Kuwait, began their preplanned attack on the fighters of Islam's positions. The United States—which sees the Iraqi regime in a ruinous dead-end—by entering a sensitive stage of the imposed war, has in practice tied the fate of the region to the fate of Saddam.

Concurrent with the participation of U.S. helicopters against the forces of Islam in the Al-Faw region, the Reagan administration's aggressive forces, in another act of aggression, surrounded two Iranian oil platforms in the Persian Gulf and set them ablaze. This act of aggression, which is linked to the joint U.S.-Iraqi aggression against Al-Faw, demonstrates that the Great Satan is conspiring to break the resistance of the Muslim nation of Iran. Britain's overt support for this aggressive act of the U.S. Administration, which was announced immediately after the U.S. forces' attack, is an indication of the breadth of the conspiracy, a conspiracy which began with the bombardment and launching of missiles against our country's residential areas. This had the support of East and West, and intensified yesterday with the commencement of the wicked U.S. attack.

The unholy alliance of the United States, Arab reactionaries, and Eastern arrogance in support of the Iraqi regime and their efforts to prevent the fall of the Ba'thist Iraqi regime has lately taken on a new and broad dimension. This, in itself, shows clearly the anxiety of global arrogance regarding the Iraqi regime's situation.

What is the Iranian nation's response to these act of wickedness and aggression? The heroic nation of Iran, in the course of 8 years of imposed war, and with praise-inspiring bravery and resistance, has forced the United States to directly enter the war. Moreover, it will undoubtedly be this resistance and the decisive confrontation of the powerful fighters of Islam that will make it regret its acts. These acts will not fulfill U.S. interests in the world. The Persian Gulf and U.S. allies must taste the bitterness of the consequences of their master's aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran. The United States must understand that the time has passed when it could force countries into line with its own corrupt interests using threats and intimidation. The Muslim Iranian nation has resolved to be independent, and, toward that aim, it will not spare any effort.

The U.S. people must know that the Reagan administration and the cowboys ruling them will take them into a deep swamp that will result in nothing except the death of U.S. forces. The fighters of Islam will give the appropriate response to the aggressive U.S. forces. They will make the Reagan administration and its supporters regret their action, and the Persian Gulf will become the graveyard for NATO soldiers.

Combat Veterans Called to Arms

LD181026 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0958 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] O heroic ummah, please pay attention to an important communique from the Supreme War Support Council.

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. O combative nation of Iran! In direct, open, and practical support for the Iraqi regime, U.S. forces have entered the war. Last night, in a coordinated plan and in line with the attack by the Iraqi forces on the positions of the fighters of Islam in the Al-Faw peninsula, U.S. military personnel attacked the positions of the fighters of Islam on that peninsula.

The criminal United States today attacked Iran's oil installations in the Persian Gulf. U.S. helicopters and warships opened fire on two of our oil platforms. Now that the two evil superpowers have entered the imposed war in full-scale support of the Iraqi regime and now that sensitive and hysterical conditions prevail in the Persian Gulf region, it is up to us to wholeheartedly take part in this holy defense against the U.S. invasion and play our historical role. Therefore, those who have so far taken part on the war fronts must rush to IRGC Basij bases to take part in the holy defense, in response to the IRGC call, as soon as possible.

[Signed] The Supreme War Support Council

IRGC, Basij Signing Volunteers

LD181057 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1001 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] The heroic ummah of Iran, please pay attention to an important communique issued by the IRGC General Staff:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful: Following the victories gained by the courageous personnel of the corps of monotheism in the battlefields and after liberating several towns in northern Iraq, the enemies of the Iranian Muslim revolution and nation are trying their utmost to compensate for the repeated defeats suffered by the abject regime of Iraq led by the criminal America. After the attack by enemy forces on the forces of Islam in Al-Faw region yesterday in which our forces were and still are engaged in fierce battle with the Zionist forces of Iraq, last night U.S. helicopters attacked the forces of Islam from the southern side of

Al-Faw. This comes at a time when the small shaykhdom of Kuwait has, in line with U.S. policies, put Bubiyan Island at Iraq's disposal to be used to attack Al-Faw.

After last night's attack by U.S. helicopters on Iranian forces in Al-Faw, at 0900 this morning the Nasr oil platform, and at 0938 the Salman oil platform, both situated in the Persian Gulf and both lacking any defensive capability, were surrounded by U.S. forces. The aggressive Americans landed on the platforms and planted explosives on them. They then proceeded to shell and blow up the platforms. Because the heroic and courageous nation of Iran has been subjected to spiteful actions by the hegemonist superpowers, particularly the criminal America, we must rise as one to the defense of our Islamic country and revolution and as always to attack the criminal enemy. This is because the destruction of the enemy depends on the extended presence of our heroic nation in the arena of this holy war.

The IRGC calls on all volunteers, particularly the Basij fighters, to wear the armor of holy war and (?resistance) in continuing the dispatch of the Imam Hoseyn forces, peace be upon him. Now is the time to go to the battlefield, the day when the angels are singing the praise of the crusaders. From dawn till dusk they should go forth and affirm that the blood of the martyrs is everlasting. Courageous ummah and the steadfast nation, the IRGC centers and Basij bases all over the country are ready to enroll all volunteers. The combative forces, including the redispatched forces, specialized and supply forces should immediately refer to the said centers in order to help the forces of Islam and to safeguard the achievements of the victorious operations of the fighters of Islam so that they can be sent to the fronts of the war of right against wrong.

[Signed] The IRGC General Staff

Majlis Speaker on U.S. 'Lie' Over Mining

LD180538 Tehran IRNA in English 0533 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 18, IRNA—Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani said here Sunday that the news of U.S. frigate "Samuel Roberts" hitting a mine at the Persian Gulf may be a purposeful lie by the United States. He said European minesweepers had recently left the waterway since, they said, there were no more mines to be swept in the Persian Gulf. He was addressing a group of visiting servicemen and relatives of martyred soldiers here Sunday on the occasion of the "Soldiers Week."

Elswehere in his talks to the visiting group he paid tribute to servicemen and conscript soldiers and described them as being "guardians of Islam." Hashemi-Rafsanjani reminded that no determined nation can be pushed to submission by mere power of force, and added that if sheer force were enough for doing so the struggling Afghans would have been defeated several years ago. Towards the end of his talks the Majlis speaker promised a strong, independent, and well-developed nation for the Iranians in the coming years.

Malekzadegan Comments on Mining Incident

LD170807 Tehran IRNA in English 0750 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 17, IRNA—Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Mohammad Hoseyn Malekzadegan said here Saturday that the Iranian military forces will have joint war games at the Gulf of Oman by June. Talking at a press conference on the occasion of "Soldiers Week" he said that during the last year Iraq tried to cripple Iran's navigation at the Persian Gulf deploying Tupolov warplanes mounted with 601-type missiles, but that the Iranians neutralized Iraq's scheme.

"In return more damage was inflicted upon commercial ships, oil tankers, and warships of the arrogant powers and regional countries elsewhere at the waterway," he said. Reflecting on the American destroyer "Samuel B. Robert's" hitting mines in the Persian Gulf Thursday Malekzadegan said the incident is proof to the inefficiency of U.S. mine sweepers, and betrays the Americans and other world powers who had earlier claimed that their sweepers had swept the entirety of mines from the Persian Gulf. He noted that as a result of the presence of the foreign warships in the Persian Gulf the waterway is now even more insecure than it used to be at a more distant past.

He said, already significant modifications have been made in the guiding and shooting mechanisms of Iran's missiles details of which development, he said, would be brought public knowledge at a later ocassion.

WIH Spokesman Terms Incident 'Suspicious'

LD171544 Tehran IRNA in English 1531 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 17, IRNA—A spokesman for the War Information Headquarters (WIH) today refuted claims that Iran was behind mine-laying in the Persian Gulf and said the recent incident of an American frigate running into a mine "seems quite suspicious." The WIH spokesman said that the warship USS "Samuel Roberts" striking a mine in the Persian Gulf is another plot aimed at maintaining the presence of Western countries' naval fleets in the region.

He said that an analysis of the whole incident over the past three days indicates that mine-laying charges against Iran is a pre-planned conspiracy to prevent European naval fleets from leaving the Persian Gulf. European countries realising that their military presence in the Persian Gulf is in fact an exercise in futility, began withdrawing their navies from the region of late, despite U.S. opposition, he noted.

The spokesman, saying that European countries which had sent their naval fleets to the Persian Gulf at the invitation of the U.S. have now decided to withdraw from the region, noted that such a decision spells the defeat of Washington's plan. For this reason, he said, the U.S. has again accused Iran of laying mines in the region.

U.S. Warned Against Retaliation for Mining

LD161905 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Reports are circulating in the United States regarding Reagan's meetings with his advisers in order to formulate a decision on the U.S. reaction toward the warship "Samuel Roberts" collision with a mine in the Persian Gulf and the possibility of a U.S. military move by the United States against Iran. A WIH spokesman said: If the United States embarks on a new aggression against Iran, the Islamic Republic will severely react against it. The United States wickedness will not be left without a reply. Any U.S. aggression against Iran will meet with a decisive response from the fighters of Islam.

On the U.S. warship's collision with a mine in the Persian Gulf, he said: These events are the natural outcome of the United States' aggressive presence in the Persian Gulf. One of the main causes of lack of security in the Persian Gulf is the unlawful presence of U.S. military personnel in the region. He added: Since the beginning of the month of Khordad [21 May-20 June] last year when the United States sent its military forces to the Persian Gulf on the pretext of defending shipping, we have witnessed an increased lack of security in the Persian Gulf. This is precisely in keeping with what the Islamic Republic has always said, that maintaining security in the Persian Gulf should be carried out by the countries of the region and the aggressive and unlawful presence of other countries only serves to complicate matters in the region.

The WIH spokesman said: Baseless allegations leveled by official and UN organizations in the United States about Iran planting mines in the Persian Gulf can never hide the multitude of problems created by the U.S. aggressive presence in the Persian Gulf. If the United States uses this pretext to launch an aggression against Iran, it should be prepared for a harsh response. He added: Ever since the world was shocked by the tragedy of Halabjah, the United States began extensive efforts to divert world opinion from this gerat crime. The baseless lie about Iran's use of chemical weapons which was first publicized by the United States about 2 weeks ago, and then followed up by the Iraqi regime, is precisely aimed at exonerating the rulers of Baghdad from the horrifying crime of Halabjah. However, the depth of that tragedy prevented the U.S. from using this propaganda-political conspiracy. At present, taking political and propaganda advantage from natural events and predictable results of its military presence in the Persian Gulf, the United States is trying to undermine the worldwide condemnation of Iraq, since this condemnation is, in fact, aimed at the United States as one of the countries providing Iraq with chemical weapons.

The WIH spokesman said in conclusion: The United States is well acquainted with the Muslim Iranian nation's anti-U.S. and anti-colonialist attitude. The United States has seen the 8-year-long resistance and defense by the people of Iran against the aggressions by the Ba'thist regime of Iraq under the most difficult conditions. Therefore, the ruling U.S. elite should realize that the heroic nation of Iran will not remain silent in the face of aggression. Iran will give a jaw-breaking reply to the aggressor. Past experiences indicate that in cases where nations have defended themselves against aggression, they have been successful.

WIH Assails Iraqi Use of Bubiyan Island

LD180438 Tehran IRNA in English 0433 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 18, IRNA—A spokesman for the WIH said Sunday that Kuwait has breached the regulations of good neighborliness with Iran by allowing Iraq the use of Bubiyan Island in its Saturday attack in the Al-Faw Peninsula. The WIH official warned Kuwait that resorting to such hostile moves would be to the detriment of the shaykhdom. He said Iranian military officials have realised that Iraq has used Kuwait's Bubiyan Island in its helicopter attacks against Iranian positions.

Refuting Kuwait's repeated claims of neutrality in the Iraq-Iran war, the WIH spokesman said this again reveals that the tiny Persian Gulf state is practically siding with the Baghdad regime in its war against the Islamic Republic. It is not the first time that the Kuwaiti rulers are providing Iraq with their air and ground facilities despite Iran's repeated warnings. In related news, the Iranian Embassy in Kuwait submitted a strong protest note to the Kuwait Foreign Ministry Monday morning, on the same subject. The letter warned Kuwait to "immediately stop this hostile move or else it would be responsible for the consequences of this dangerous game," the Iranian protest note stressed.

Iraqi troops launched a heavy offensive in the Al-Faw Peninsula Saturday night but were repelled by Iranian forces sustaining heavy casualties and losses.

Heavy Fighting Reported in Al-Faw Area

Iraqi Troops Routed

LD171052 Tehran IRNA in English 1049 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 17, IRNA—A group of Iraqi troops trying to infiltrate Iranian positions in Al-Faw peninsula last night were routed by Iran's Muslim combatants suffering hundreds of casualties. The remaining Iraqi troops retreated.

Fighting Continues

LD171647 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] The General Staff of the IRGC announced in a communique: Following the victories gained by the blasphemy fighting fighters of Islam on the battlefronts, which resulted in the liberation of vast areas in northern Iraq, and in order to compensate for its heavy defeats, the enemy this morning used all its capabilities to launch an attack in the Al-Faw region. The powerful and courageous fighters of Islam confronted this attack. At present, fierce fighting continues between our forces and the enemy. The forces of the Zionist regime of Iraq are suffering heavy damage and casualties.

Iraq Uses Chemical Weapons

LD171649 Tehran IRNA in English 1646 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 17, IRNA—The Iraqi Ba'thist regime yet again resorted to an extensive chemical bombardment during its aborted attack on Iranian positions in Al-Faw Peninsula, Saturday night and Sunday morning. Within a month of the Halabjah chemical holocaust (March 18), Iraqi troops felt bold enough to chemically bombard Al-Faw Peninsula with mustard, nerve and cyanide gases, since 05:00 hours local time (01:30 gmt) Sunday, in a futile bid to break through Iranian positions.

Latest reports reaching here said that Iran's Muslim combatants have smashed the enemy attack, killing and wounding thousands of Ba'thist troops. They are now busy decontaminating the region of toxic gas effects. A number of Iranian combatants affected by Iraqi toxic arms were immediately rushed behind the fronts for treatment.

Bombing Missions Detailed

LD181120 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Text] Concentration points, fortifications, and armored equipment belonging to the enemy were bombarded in 15 air raids this morning in the Al-Faw operational theater. The Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, using several of their fighter bombers, carried out 15 separate missions at 0540, 0600, 0605, 0615, 0700, 0715, 0720, 0730, 0820, 0830, 0900, 0915, 0930, 0950, and 1100 today attacking the concentration points, fortifications, armored equipment and military vehicles of the Zionist enemy in the Al-Faw operational theaters with their fiery bombs. After inflicting heavy damage and casualties on the enemy they all safely returned to base. Scores of enemy tanks, personnel carriers, and machines were destroyed and hundreds of Iraqi forces were either killed or wounded.

The same report indicates that the aggressive regime of Iraq made the Al-Faw operational theater the target of its extensive shelling and chemical bombs, yesterday and last night. Iraqi planes dropped chemical bombs on the Al-Faw region several times today. In the course of these bombings, a number of the fighters of Islam were wounded. They were transferred behind the frontline.

According to this report, fierce fighting continues between the forces of Islam and that of the enemy in Al-Faw. The Zionist enemy continues to use its artillery to fire chemical shells at Iranian positions.

U.S. Helicopters Attack Al-Faw

LD181015 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0945 GMT 18 Apr 88

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] Resisting and combative people of Iran, please pay attention. In a coordinated operation, U.S. and Iraqi forces, using the facilities of the Kuwaiti Shaykhdom, attacked the defensive lines of the combatants of Islam from two fronts. According to an IRNA report, the fighters of Islam, who were facing U.S. and Iraqi forces on two fronts, bravely defended the attacks of the enemies of the Islamic Revolution. According to this report, the Iraqi regime yesterday brought its forces to the Al-Faw area and made extensive attempts to capture Al-Faw. In repelling the enemy, the fighters of Islam engaged the Iraqi forces in fierce combat, inflicting heavy casualties on them, crushing their effort.

The forces of Islam are also observing the activities of enemy helicopters on Kuwait's Bubiyan Island. On a number of occasions their heavy fire has foiled helicopter attempts to attack defensive lines. According to this report, while the forces of Islam were engaged in combat with Iraqi forces, U.S. war helicopters attacked the positions of the forces of Islam in southern Al-Faw on a number of occasions from the sea.

The attacks by the U.S. helicopters—which were in direct support of the Ba'thist forces and intended to disrupt the battle formation of the forces of Islam who were in combat with the Ba'thist forces—were confronted with a speedy and decisive reaction by the forces of Islam. The fighters of Islam immediately brought the U.S. helicopters under light and heavy weapons' fire, forcing the invading helicopters to hastily fire their rockets and flee the area.

Missile Strikes, Ground Operations Continue

Communique No 3,173

LD151905 Tehran IRNA in English 1815 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 15, IRNA—Some six surface-to-surface missiles were fired at Iraqi military and economic centers in Basra, 'Ali al-Gharbi and Khanaqin on

Friday, in retaliation for Iraqi air and missile attacks on Iranian cities, said a military communique released here today. The 3173rd communique of the Joint Staff Command also said Iraqi Ba'thists sustained substantial casualties and damage when military and economic installations of Al-Sulaymaniyah, Qal'at Dizah, Khanaqin, Banmil, Naft Khaneh, Basra and 'Ali al-Gharbi as well as garrisons of Qasr and Helaleh and Dukan were shelled by long-range artillery fire of the Islamic Republic's Army Ground Forces, from 14:30 GMT Thursday to 02:30 GMT Friday.

The communique said that exchange of fire raged in northwestern, western and southern fronts between Muslim combatants of Iran and enemy forces. It said some Iraqi troops were killed and wounded and several gun-emplacements of theirs destroyed in the course of the Muslim combatants' heavy shelling on enemy forces' fortifications, positions and supply routes. Movement of Iraqi vehicles were also checked by the Muslim combatants, it added. Iranian planes effectively carried out reconnaissance flights over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman on Thursday, it said.

Iranian naval forces, the communique said, intercepted some 12 foreign commercial ships and tankers in the Strait of Hormuz but allowed them to proceed with their voyage since they had no Iraqi-bound cargo aboard.

Some Iraqi patrol forces attempted to infiltrate the Muslim combatants' positions in Sumar operational region, but were forced to flee sustaining casualties, it added. Iranian Gendarmerie forces opened fire on Iraqi positions, killing and wounding some enemy troops and dstroying various gun emplacements of theirs, concluded the communique.

Iraqi Missiles Hit Tehran

LD160634 Tehran IRNA in English 0625 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 16, IRNA—Baghdad continued its missile and air attacks on Iranian cities Friday and Saturday morning taking civilians' tolls. Three residential quarters in Tehran were hit by three Iraqi missiles Saturday morning, and some people lost their lives or were injured and a number of houses were damaged. Qom and the city of Esfahan, central Iran were hit by missiles Friday night and again Saturday morning and many civilians lost their lives in the two cities, and several houses and shops were destroyed.

In the bombardment of cities of Sa'in Dezh (East Azarbayjan Province), Dezful in southern Iran and Hamadan in Hamadan Province Friday four civilians were martyred. Several houses, shops and a mosque were damaged.

Casualties From Missiles Noted

LD161215 Tehran IRNA in English 1209 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 16, IRNA—Several civilians were martyred and a group of others wounded in Saturday's Iraqi missile attacks on Tehran and enemy air raids on Hamadan and Dezful cities. Some houses, shops and cars were also damaged in the enemy attacks.

Air Force Bombs Iraqi Cities

LD160836 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0801 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Dear listeners. Please pay attention to a report which we have just received from the Joint Staff of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Army:

The brave and fast flying pilots of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in retaliation for the satanic attacks of the Iraqi Ba'thist-Zionist regime on the residential areas of our country, this morning heavily bombed military and economic sites in several important Iraqi cities and set them on fire. According to the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the brave pilots of the Air Force carried out a series of successful and brave operations deep inside Iraqi territory over the city of Ba'qubeh. Such operations are regarded as the most oustanding aerial operations today.

In their operations this morning the brave men of the Iranian Air Force broke the powerful defenses of Ba'qubeh and bombed the military and economic establishments of this city. They left flames of fire and smoke behind. The city of Ba'qubeh is situated 28 miles to the northeast of Baghdad, the Iraqi capital.

Meanwhile, the bombers of the Iranian Air Force heavily bombed economic and military establishments of the criminal enemy in the towns of Puk, Zakhu, and Irbil. They were bombed in retaliation for the murder of the innocent people of our country through the enemy air and missile attacks. As a result of these bombings, heavy casualties and damage were inflicted on the Baghdad regime. The brave pilots of our country all returned safely to their bases after successfully performing this series of retaliatory operations.

Communique No 3,174

LD161717 Tehran IRNA in English 1650 GMT 16 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 16, IRNA—Iranian jet fighters flew four sorties Saturday, heavily bombing economic and military centers in Ba'qubah, 28 miles northeast of Baghdad, and also in Kut, Zakhu and Irbil, said a military communique here today. All the attacking fighter planes returned safely to bases after inflicting substantial casualties and losses on the enemy.

The 3174th Joint Staff communique said that the bombing missions were carried out as a reprisal for recurring Iraqi attacks on Iranian cities. Iranian long-range artillery fire pounded eco-military centers in Iraqi cities and towns of Basra, Banmil, Naft Khaneh, Maydan, Badrah, Al-Sulaymaniyah, Qal'at Dizah, Khanaqin and 'Ali al-Gharbi as well as Dukan Dam and military garissons of Qasr and Helaleh until 18:00 hours local time (14:30 GMT) today. The Iranian attacks inflicted heavy casualties and losses on the enemy.

In the Strait of Hormuz, Iranian missiles boats intercepted and searched six cargo ships and oil tankers Friday but allowed them to continue voyage after making certain they were not carrying cargo for the Iraqi regime. The Islamic Republic Air Force effectively carried out its routine patrol missions over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman yesterday ignoring a provocative warning from a foreign warship. Providing air cover for the Navy, it also reconnoitered 48 ships in the waterway.

Exchange of artillery and mortar fire continued throughout the battlefields Friday raging somewhat more heavily in Chazabeh and Qasr-e Shirin, southern and western sectors, as a result of which Iraqi troops sustained heavy losses in men and equipment. On Friday, Iranian Gendarmerie forces checked Iraqi engineering operations in parts of the southern and western fronts, killing or wounding a number of enemy soldiers, concluded the communique.

Missiles Fired at Shiraz, Tehran

LD171539 Tehran IRNA in English 1533 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 17, IRNA—A number of civilians were martyred and some others wounded when the Iraqi regime missile-attacked residential areas in Shiraz, Fars Province on Sunday afternoon. Nine civilians, including several children and women were martyred and some others wounded in Tehran and Shiraz when the two cities were hit by enemy long-range missiles. Several houses, shops and vehicles were also damaged in the inhuman enemy attacks.

Communique No 3,175

LD171726 Tehran IRNA in English 1705 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 17, IRNA—Iranian coastal artillery hit four Iraqi vessels in the Khawr 'Abdullah waterway Sunday morning, sinking three of them and heavily damaging the 4th one, said a Military Communique here today. The narrow Khawr 'Abdullah waterway at the headwaters of the Persian Gulf separates Kuwait from the war fronts. The 3175th Joint Staff Communique said that several civilians were martyred and wounded and some houses, shops and cars damaged in today's Iraqi missile attacks on Tehran and Shiraz.

Iranian long-range artillery fire heavily shelled economic and military centers in the Iraqi cities of Basra, 'Ali al-Gharbi, Khanaqin, Naft Khaneh, Banmil, Qal'at Dizah, Dukan and Dar al-Salam as well as military garrisons of Qasr and Chuman-Mostafa from 18:00 hours Saturday to 06:00 hours Sunday. In the southern waters, the Islamic Republic Air Force effectively carried out reconnaissance flights yesterday in support of the Navy, ignoring two provocative warnings from the U.S. naval fleet. In the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's naval gunboats, controlling shipping traffic, carried out their routine patrol missions Saturday but found no traces indicating shipment of cargo for Iraq.

Exchange of artillery fire between Iran's Muslim forces and Iraqi troops continued throughout the battlefields with the former holding the upper hand and the latter sustaining heavy casualties and losses. In Sumar, western sector, Iranian artillery fire inflicted heavy casualties and losses on Iraqi troops besides forcing an enemy patrol unit to flee yesterday. Iraqi troops sustained heavy casualties and losses in parts of the southern and western fronts, during artillery duels with Iranian Gendarmerie forces Saturday, concluded the communique.

IRGC Sinks Iraqi Frigate

LD171731 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Dear listeners, please pay attention to a report which has just been handed to me: The IRGC General Staff in a communique announced that the fighters of the IRGC naval forces set fire to an Iraqi frigate in Khawr 'Abdullah this afternoon. In the course of the attack by the speed boats of the IRGC naval forces, the Iraqi frigate together with all its crew and equipment was set on fire and was sent to the bottom of Khawr 'Abdallah waters.

WIH Spokesman 'Categorically Denies' Plane Downed

LD171101 Tehran IRNA in English 1038 GMT 17 Apr 88

[Text] Tehran, April 17, IRNA—A spokesman for the War Information Headquarters (WIH) here Sunday categorically denied Baghdad's claim that it has downed an Iranian war plane in Dukan. The spokesman said that the Iranian Air Force carried out all successful missions Saturday and returned safely to basis. "Such unfounded claims," he commented, "are not new, and the battered Iraqi regime resorts to such publicity maneuvers in order to deflect world attention from its own set-backs in the battlefields."

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Delivers Friday Prayers Sermon

LD152110 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1540 GMT 15 Apr 88

[Friday prayers sermon delivered by Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani at Tehran University on 15 April—recorded]

[Excerpts] Some 80 percent of the fighting forces are composed of conscripts or mobilization forces, a type of conscripts, who volunteer for the holy war even before

reaching the age of conscription or after reaching that age. They, particularly the conscripts and volunteers, are seldom referred to publicly, although they perform their duty. They do not go to the holy war to achieve fame, yet it is our duty to express our gratitude to them. In all operations, the conscripts or the mobilization forces perform the most difficult work. If one day we publish the list of our martyrs, our missing-in-action, our POW's, and our wounded, the nation will see clearly how a large part belongs to this group and how great is their honor.

The soldiers are in the service of the holy war and defense of the country at the best age of their lives and in the best hours of their life, from the age of 18 or 19, the best age for a young man. They also endure great hardships during their training and their defense. We should be full of gratitude for them and we are. Of course, the country belongs to them. They are just beginning their lives and it is for the sake of their future, for their society, for their families, for their soil, and for their own religion, that they perform their sacred task. As for the Armed Forces, who are commemorated this week, we see their brilliant deeds in the "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-5" operations, to which I will also refer in speaking about the war.

The other issue I shall address is the anniversary of the group in charge of allocating land. This holy institution has rendered very valuable services to the country. I hope that on the occasion of their anniversary they will be able to explain its work to the people. According to the statistics at our disposal, during the past few years they have placed some 500,000 hectares of wasteland, never before cultivated, at the disposal of farmers. They have helped the farmers, given them loans, and have organized them. In the past year these hectares of land produced 1.3 million tonnes of products. Some 80,000 families are now earning a living from the land placed at their disposal.

According to one figure which I have received, these same people, who had nothing and who have now become farmers, have donated 141 million tumans to the battlefronts. They also have programs for organizing short-term cultivation and other activities, and their work is effective. We hope they will be able to implement the project for reviving wastelands and increasing production throughout the country when legal problems are, God willing, removed from their path. The representative of these gentlemen has talked here before us and I hope that his remarks will be published.

Another issue which we are faced with is the issue of elections, part of which we have left behind and part of which is still being implemented. I wish to refer to two important points regarding the elections. The first point is to thank the people. In these elections the people truly rose to this epic occasions and what they did amazed the whole world. I asked one of the Western reporters from England who interviewed me: Did you go to polling stations in Tehran? He answered: Yes, no one stopped me and I went and visited everywhere I wanted. I asked him: How did you find the elections? He replied: Under the present conditions,in which the people were threatened with bombs and missiles, they were present in such large numbers, they formed such long queues in front of polling booths, the like of which we do not see in the West. He said: For us Western reporters the number of people was really amazing. In Tehran, which we thought was deserted and that perhaps the people had left town due to the danger of missiles, we did not think that the polling stations would be so crowded.

The second point which was of interest to me was what he said about freedom. He said: With all my being I felt the freedom to vote here. The people came to the polling booths, they discussed their uncertainties, and they voted for their candidate. They wrote in secret. They placed their votes in the polling boxes in secret and, despite all the lies which are spread by your counterrevolutionaries abroad, no one interfered in the affairs of the people, and so the people could cast their vote freely. This is what that Western reporter said regarding his own observations.

The presence of the people in the polling stations under present conditions was very important to us. This issue is always important to us, because we want our system to be based on the voice, the votes of the people, so that our Majlis, our president, and ultimately our government, and all our organizations can be based on public elections. On the day we see that the people do not go to vote we will feel defeated. This time particularly there was a conspiracy to prevent you from going to the polling booths, so that they could announce to the world that the Iranian nation has broken away from its revolution. You delivered an amazing blow, because in the course of the first elections to the Majlis, more than 10 million, nearly 11 million people took part. In the second elections nearly 16 million people took part, despite the fact that in many of our cities, our western cities, as well as Tehran, Isfahan, and Qom, due to the threats which existed, many of the people had left those towns. The people of Tehran and some other cities who had gone to other towns were very worried that they could not return to Tehran, and went to the polling booths in those places and asked what they could do. They said wanted to perform their duty. When the people have such a strong sense of duty this revolution is victorious. We are sincerely grateful to you. On behalf of his holiness the imam, our dear, illustrious, and great leader, I thank you, the good and illustrious and believing and intelligent people.

The next point I wish to raise concerns both the people and those who have been elected, and those who have not been elected. This point is in the form of brotherly and friendly advice. Before making that point, I must express my thanks to the esteemed people of Tehran for the trust they have placed in me and for having voted for me. I have been very busy serving for the past 7 or 8

years on the basis of your votes. This vote for me confirms the correctness of the path of the Islamic Republic because if there is anyone who should be regarded as one of the leading officials who is responsible for all the good things and bad things, it is me. I am one of the persons who should be answerable for the affairs of the country in a very fundamental way. If the people were dissatisfied with the clergy or with the officials of the country, they would not have voted for us. This is a document for us to show that the path which has been chosen by the revolution is acceptable to the people.

Now we come to the advice. This system of democracy and elections and voting, in addition to the fact that the declaration of allegiance and voting existed from the beginning of Islam, is something that is well-known and that has been presented in this form by the West. This system has certain requirements. If we do not act in accordance with those requirements we will not benefit from this system. Elections mean a race between certain individuals, and the people will vote for their choices. In the elections one person wins and another person loses. Particularly in elections like the Majlis, one person wins and seven or eight people are defeated. This is the nature of the elections. Whenver you have elections, whether to the Majlis, among the people, for a President, or for any other purpose, some will win and some will lose. At the time of the elections many recommendations were made urging the people that publicity should be carried out correctly, that there should be no lies, that people should not accuse others, that they should not mislead the people. Those were the duties referred to. After the elections we also have other duties, namely, when the elections are over those who have been victorious should not think that now they can begin to purge those who were not elected; to change the governors, the mayors, the directors or deputy directors; either try to change those who are busy working and who have gained some knowledge about their work and who wish to serve, or to start attacking them because they are not members of our faction and so on. This is a sin which if we commit will make the elections harmful for us.

This is one problem. The second problem concerns those who were not successful. They must noe think of starting quarrels and casting aspersions on those who were elected, saying that they cheated, they lied, that our votes have been tampered with; or for them to start making remarks leading to continuous acrimony; to gather together their supporters and engage in demonstrations and acts of sabotage. I accept the fact that certain individuals may feel that they have been wronged. This is possible. It is also possible that some offences have been committed in some places. However, there is a solution for that. They can work through the Council of Guardians comprised of six jurisconsults who have been appointed by the imam and who are dutybound to investigate complaints. If some people have any complaints they should refer to the Council of Guardians without any fuss.

We are certain that the members of the Council of Guardians are not the kind of people who would act unjustly and who would give a wrong verdict. We will not be able to find any more just judges of our work. If they decide an offence has been committed, they will announce it. If they decide the elections have been incorrect, they will invalidate them. However, if they decide the problem has not been very extensive, they may invalidate the results of one or two polling stations.

After that, we should pay attention to Islamic morality. It is our prerogative to have differences of views and differences of opinion. We are justified in being supporters of one person, in regarding him as better, and in feeling less inclined toward another person. The people are entitled to vote for whomever they choose. So far, this is proper. This is the best system that is both accepted by Islam and is today accepted by the wise people of the world. If we had no elections, the alternative would be dictatorship and appointments. In that case, we would only have appointments not elections.

I urge all the people who supported the losers not to rally themselves through animosity and vengefulness. If this happens, the elections would be harmful, and Muslims would continue criticizing one another, neutralize each other's works, and prevent the deputies from performing their tasks. In the Majlis I will also urge the deputies not to misuse the free podium of the Majlis for the sake of these issues—that because they have won they can now crush their opponents. I urge the media not to become a conduit for this great sin. They should try to censor such divisive talk and not allow it to be published or broadcast.

I said differences of opinion are something that the people are entitled to. This is true at all levels and there is nothing wrong with it. Our ulema of the first rank had differences of opinion. The companions of the prophet who were in the presence of the prophet had differences of opinion. Today our ulema have differences of opinion. Differences of opinion have arisen among the association of the militant clergy of Tehran, something which has become the issue of the day. Differences of opinion arose during the elections. Some people favored one group and some another group. It reached such a level that they could not cooperate with one another. This is acceptable. You noticed that his holiness the imam also accepted the differences. When a number of people cannot cooperate with one another under the same roof, there is nothing wrong for them to separate from one another and to work. However, in yesterday's message from the imam, in the imam's reply, he made a point and if you pay attention to that point, you will also have acted according to my advice. The imam graciously said that differences of opinion should not lead to clashes. He said: I know the members of the clergy are not the kind of people who will clash with one another due to differences of opinion.

Yes, we regard differences of opinion as acceptable. You see, his holiness the imam pays for the propaganda work of both factions of the clergy. The imam used to put some funds at the disposal of the association of militant clergy for the expenses they incurred for the dispatch of preachers, for religious work. But at that time he had told them not spend that money on elections, and they did not do so. Those gentlemen who wished to be separated told the imam that they had no money. The imam told them: I will also give you some money, but do not spend it on the elections, spend it on your current expenditure, on your office, on the dispatch of preachers, on seeing to the affairs of the people.

Therefore, while we have differences of opinion it is possible to act in accordance with Islamic morality, not to attack one another, not to cast aspersions on one another, not to defame another person. The media, and the press particularly, I urged them not to commit this great sin, to follow this one or that one, and to repeat malicious reports and pit one against another, thus giving rise to differences and hostility. Allow the differences of opinion to be expressed in a healthy atmosphere and allow each person to say whatever he wants. Of course, I know that if we do not talk a lot, if we do not engage in propaganda, some people may not get to know us. Well, there is this limitation. We should talk within the limits allowed, within the limits of religious law and civil law.

Do we not claim that we wish to perform our duty? If you ask any deputy he says he has come forward in order to perform his duty. In the Islamic Republic the same should be true of every employee. If we do not receive enough votes, and the people do not want us to perform our duty, what else have we got to say? God has removed responsibility from us and we can serve elsewhere. All of us should feel like this. As for the person who received the votes, his duty is not to crush other people. His duty is to get closer and to become friendly with the other person. [passage omitted]

The nation should know that those who attack others after the elections and who cause arguments and hostility—whether those who have won or those who have lost—are committing treason against Islam and the revolution. This should be a yardstick for you to distinguish righteous people from the unrighteous. If a person feels really wronged, he should refer his case to the Council of Guardians, and if he does not receive satisfaction, the issue is with God.

However, a more important issue for us is the war and the current conditions in our country in relation to the war which, in my view, are extremely important. I ask the dear nation to pay special attention to this part of my talk. Since we started to chip away at the power of the Iraqi Ba'th Party, we came across new plots against us at every stage to force us to surrender and forego our rights and accept an imposed peace—no you cannot call it peace—an imposed cease-fire.

The latest phase in this was the issue of the Persian Gulf [as heard]. You saw their invasion. Then we announced that the United States will fail in this undertaking because of our reliance on popular support, something we know exists within the revolution. Fortunately, after the passage of 1 year we can see that the United States has been defeated and is disgraced. The latest incident is that of the unfortunate U.S. frigate that exploded in the Persian Gulf last night while escorting another vessel. The Americans have so far said 10—at first they said 4—have been wounded. I do not know how many and what the conditions were. In any case, this is the fate of the United States, you can see the United States disgraced before the eyes of the world, of the U.S. nation. It has sent vessels to guard tankers and as the commander of the vessel confessed, although they saw the mine and turned off their engines, they were unable to do anything.

Please people, do not chant anything right now, there is not enough time and there is a good deal to say. God willing, you will have time for chants later. We know they brought a large number of mine-sweepers, helicopters, and other modern equipment, the latest equipment, to the Persian Gulf and this still happened after a year of their minesweeping.

This disgrace is terrible for the Americans, for the British, the Danes and all the rest of them. We stated that the U.S. adventure in the Persian Gulf is doomed to failure. You can see they neither established security nor managed to save Saddam or any of the reactionary Arab shaykhs. They have not scared the Islamic Republic, either. As a result we paid more attention to our Navy and, as a result, our power in the southern waters is greater than last year. This is a direct result of their presence in the southern waters of our country.

However, their new plot which is in progress, is the issue of the war of the cities and missile attacks against distant targets in Iran. This started some time ago. Both the United States and the Soviet Union, the East and the West, are responsible for this; it is not a one-sided plot. They have coordinated with other programs, with the issue of the Security Council, with chemical weapons in Iraq's possession, with their own propaganda. They have laid out a very extensive propaganda program involving many other countries. Their aim is to dishearten the Iranian nation so much so that they would weaken their resolve at war.

When I saw one of the first scenes, I realized what was going on. It was in the early days when the wave of the propaganda began about Iranians being afraid, Tehran being vacated. I saw that a number of Indians living in Iran had returned to India and Western correspondents were interviewing them in the airport at New Delhi. [passage omitted]

The number of missiles they have given Iraq is worth noting. Putting such a number of long-range missiles at the disposal of a crazy country that treats its own people

in such a terrible way is not acceptable in military or international logic. This is an unprecedented move, coupled with facilities to strike other towns. [sentence as heard] They prepared themselves to get the people of Iran by the throat, to make them rise against the war and thus solve the issue this way. We can see that this continues even now. We are at the height of the issue. We have to evaluate what has been the result for the Iraqis. I believe the latest Iraqi defeat will be more severe than all the past defeats whether in mischief in the Persian Gulf, chemical warfare, the war of the cities, the downing of passenger aircraft, or others.

This time the Russians will directly be defeated in the issue because their hands are soiled with this blood. Let me describe their achievements so far. I tell our nation, this is the fruit of resistance. They wanted to scare our nation, let us see if our people were scared away. One million extra ballots were cast in this election, even though most of our cities were empty. This is something that even the Westerners admitted. Those of our people who scare easily—the liberals, the capitalists, the smugglers, and so on—have never been involved with the war. They have always been a hindrance to the war and we do not even think about them. Those who have no fear are people like you who have gone to the ballots under missile attacks. Many times during Friday prayers, while we have been delivering a sermon, Iraqi missiles have exploded. We have heard them and you have raised your fists in response, thus punching Saddam and those who fired the missiles in the mouth.

Our readiness, stemming from the blessing of the presence of people at the fronts, led to our timely response. We carried out five crushing operations recently against Iraq, all of them unprecedented in the history of the war: "Zafar-7," "Jerusalem-3," "Val-Fajr-10," "Jerusalem-4," and recently "Jerusalem-5," all in the course of a month or so. In the course of the 8 years of the war, we have never had such an extensive amount of activity on the fronts. This is the result of Iraqi actions. Had Iraq not committed such mischief we would not have seen the need for such extensive operations. We would still prefer to have this ignorant and unaware world awaken and see that the role they have undertaken is not in their interest and to stop any further agitation of this chained dog and not give it facilities, not put a sword in the hands of the drunken black slave.

We would prefer another solution to the issue. However, we have shown our capabilities through our actions. So what has happened? The results so far are 1,200 km of the most sensitive portions of Iraqi soil has fallen into the hands our people and forces. It is too early to discuss the strategic importance and economic value of places such as Halabjah and [name indistinct].

There will be time when we will explain these things to you as well as the value of areas such as the heights we captured during "Jerusalem-3" in the Bujar area. You will understand the effects of these later. We have captured over 6,000 Saddamist forces. You know, our men at the fronts know and the Iraqis themselves know, as do the world and military experts that a single prisoner means at least 10 or more wounded or dead. That is the basic ratio, a higher figure is possible but nothing less. This means tens of thousands of Iraqi losses for 6,000 POW's. We captured an incredible quantity of vehicles, artillery pieces, tanks, and ammunition. This is important both for us and for the Iraqi economy. Some 30 Iraqi aircraft were shot down in this period. In the war of the cities the Iraqi damage is decidedly greater than ours. However, we are not pleased about this because we do not wish to harm the Iraqi people or their cities. It is something imposed on us, our hand has been forced into this.

We know. We have sent agents to Baghdad who photographed areas hit by missiles and who brought back these photographs. The craters created by our missiles hitting Baghdad are some 12 meters wide and anywhere from 10 to 12 meters deep. The shock wave is five times that of the missiles hitting Tehran, Qom, or Esfahan, that is, providing their missiles hit anything anywhere. This is the damage inflicted on Baghdad as well as on other cities. Unfortunately, Basra has been turned into a wasteland which is a tragedy for us. However, what can we do when they hit Qom, Esfahan, Bakhtaran, Arak, Hamadan, Dezful, Andimeshk, Tabriz, Orumiyeh, and many other cities? What alternative do we have but to retaliate? Some 20 or more Iraqi cities are empty because they are within our missile range. We are unhappy, however. This is Iraqi damage and may be sweet for Iraqi leaders because they are taking revenge on both nations since they have no future. [sentence as heard] This is the result of the Iraqi war of the cities.

Let us look at the issue of honor. Iraq was busy with a great deal of propaganda for many months claiming that Iran could no longer attack and Iraq was able to defeat us. You saw how they collapsed like matchsticks in one attack. The world now realizes they were lying.

Iraq's reaction in Halabjah and the fact that it was discovered are among our greatest victories. It is very important; you should take note of this. It was proven to the whole world that the Iraqi nation is not behind Saddam but with Iran. This is a very important point, because when we captured the five towns, instead of fleeing toward Iraq, the people stayed with us. They were not taken by surprise. For the first 2 days we were fighting on the heights in the south and west of Iraqi towns. On the 3d day we entered the plain. Whoever wanted to run away did so. During those 2 days, the Iraqis brought in a large number of troops. The roads were open. Those who stayed did so to be with us. You saw in the films that when our soldiers arrived in the towns, the people welcomed them as if their fathers had returned from Mecca. With cheerful faces and smiles, young girls stood on doorsteps cheering the troops. It is unprecedented for a conquering force to enter a town

and for young girls, who are the first to be frightened of the invading forces, to confront our young basijis and troops so trustingly and confidently. You saw this on film.

What did Saddam do? He committed the crime in Halabjah. It was a very ugly crime but what was discovered was important, that is, Saddam is so estranged from his people that he kills them en masse in a matter of seconds, and in such a manner that even the vilest of people find this unacceptable. Everybody is condemning this crime. The world knows that the Iraqi nation is not behind Iraq now. If anyone were to be angry with us, it should have been these same people of Halabjah. Why? Because, for 8 years they have been in our artillery range. Whenever the war of the cities started, they suffered. This is what the war of the cities is all about. We were shelling Halabjah as we were shelling Basra. However, these people understood we had to do this. We used to announce this in advance, saying: Whoever wants to go should go; and those who wanted to go did so. When they returned and saw that their homes had been hit by artillery shells, they repaired them while saying: Iran is not at fault. They were being shelled by us. They are Kurds and have been subjected to propaganda for 10 years by all the media which said that Iran is against Kurds because of the problems we had in Kordestan. They are Sunnis, and for 10 years they have been subjected to propaganda saying that this is a Shi'ite-Sunni war. Well, if anybody should be angry with us it should be them. [passage omitted]

This matter showed that the future of Iraq belongs to the Muslims, that the Iraqi Ba'thists have no future in Iraq. This is extremely hard for Iraq to swallow. It is even harder to swallow for Iraq's protectors, those who count on public opinion. This mischief of Saddam has not been fully disclosed to the people. It is so tragic that we ourselves are not willing to show the films to the world. It is very tragic; the crime is very serious. [passage omitted] This wolf, this hyena, treated his people this way. This has been broadcast all over the world. As you can see, there have been waves of condemnation of Saddam. Yesterday, the European parliament, which has not said a word in our favor even once, and not a word against Iraq so far, was forced to condemn Saddam. There is a strong wave of condemnation in the British Parliament. Of course, I must thank the Western media, those who have broadcast the news. It shows that there are still human beings who still have values. They came and took films in contaminated areas and went back and told the people; the doctors came and saw what happened and returned and told the people. We must thank them. When we criticize the West as a whole, we must consider these points. Our nation must know these facts. We must thank them. We must distinguish between the good and the bad.

The situation in Iraq today is such that no government could support it. If they do, they would be evil bastards and very impudent and shameless. This is no small tragedy. If the use of chemical weapons becomes the accepted norm, every terrorist or guerrilla could carry a chemical weapon with him and spread it wherever he wishes. It is very dangerous. The world understands this and takes note of it. Of course, those who are against Islam, who fear Islam, and are against the revolution overlook all this and covertly or openly support Saddam. The most adverse positions are taken by Arab countries in this matter. To be honest they have destroyed the reputation of Arabs. These 40 Arab countries, these cowards, said not one word of condemnation against Saddam, for the sake of Arab fanaticism. They censured their papers, radios, televisions, everything, to prevent them from reporting this tragedy. See how bad this spirit of tribesmanship and ignorant fanaticism is. [passage omitted]

Those palace-dwelling black-hearted people in Washington, London, and other places said it, those conservatives ruling in the east said it ambiguously, Hindus said it, Urdu-speakers said it, Africans said it, Americans said it; but these miserable people said nothing about Saddam's crime against the Kurds, because of fanaticism. Of course, the matter does not stop at Halabjah; all Kurdish villages in Iraq are suffering in the same way now. The Arab rulers have remained silent. We say to the Arab people: You are encumbered with bad rulers; they are taking you in the wrong direction.

On the whole, what I would like to say, ladies and gentlemen, is that we are in one of the most sensitive stages of our war. Our enemies are manipulating this stage. We can only achieve victory through resistance. I say to the young ones: Now is the time to go to the fronts. If the fronts are full of young people, we can answer any mischief. If our army, our Ground Forces are able to stage operation "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-5" immediately after Iraq started the war of the cities, capture 300 of them and kill or injure about 3,500 and deal that fatal blow, it is due to this readiness. The response to that mischief is what the army did, promptly. With this blow it showed them that their mischief would not go unanswered. [passage omitted]

There are other issues as well, but unfortunately time is short. Israel has resorted to the use of gases in Palestine and is also pushing Islamic forces into exile. Fortunately, what happened was that as soon as they exiled the combatant clergy, they went to the Iranian Embassy in Lebanon in order to prove that those who claim, behind the scenes, that the Palestinian uprising is not Islamic are not telling the truth and that their real supporter is the Islamic Republic. We thank the clergy for this action. The plots are aimed at the Hizballah in Lebanon and suspicious hands are dealing blows against the Hizballah. I warn them not to think that the Hizballah are defenseless. We will use all our capabilities to defend the Hizballah. We will not accept any disagreements among Shi'ites there. The Shi'ites must be united as should revolutionary Muslims, whether Sunni or Shi'ite, in order to jointly fight the gang of international oppression.

There are a number of Iraqi warriors and Muslim strugglers who participated in the "Val-Fajr-10" and "Jerusalem-4" operations as part of the 10th Badr Corps. I state that the Badr Corps at the moment is among the best on the battlefield. We would give them high marks, the very highest; it would be hard to mark them as second. They have a large number of people, fight well, and right now, while I am talking to you, they are busy fighting in (Sheykh-e Shemiran) and defeating one of the heavy Iraqi counterattacks there. They are combative, Muslim, and faithful people and we hope they will be the foundations of the next military move. The Kurds that are cooperating with us, the other Iraqi groups, all of them are fighting the Saddamists right now side by our side with the forces of Islam.

We thank the Supreme Assembly of Islamic Revolution in Iraq for organizing such a massive force to defend the people of Iraq. [passage omitted]